SOLYMAN

AND

ALMENA.

AN ORIENTAL TALE.

BY DR. LANGHORNE.

----Libet partho torquere cydonia cornu
Spicula------- Virg.

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TO THE QUEEN.

MADAM,

TO the public teſtimonies of reſpect and duty offered to your Majeſty on the happy occaſion of your nuptials, may an individual add his wiſhes for the long continuance of an union ſo auſpicious to your people?

Diſtinguiſhed by every amiable and elegant accompliſhment, your Majeſty will not refuſe your royal favour to Solyman and Almena, ſince theſe characters are drawn, however imperfect, in the cauſe of truth and virtue.

With all poſſible reſpect and duty,

I am, Madam,

Your Majeſty's

Moſt humble

And

Moſt faithful Servant,

JOHN LANGHORNE.

SOLYMAN AND ALMENA.

CHAPTER I.

LET the ſons and daughters of affliction receive comfort from hope. The motion of the ſun-beams on the wave is not more uncertain than the condition of human life. Miſery, therefore, has much to hope, and happineſs much to fear; but virtue has always a reſource in Providence, which not only improves the bleſſings, but mitigates the evils of life.

In a pleaſant valley of Meſopotamia, on the banks of the Irwan, lived Solyman, the ſon of Ardavan the Sage. He was early inſtructed in all the learning of the eaſt; but, as his underſtanding opened, he grew weary of the labours of ſtudy, and thirſted only for the knowledge of mankind. With much importunity he prevailed on his father to permit him to travel.

'My ſon,' ſaid Ardavan, 'let not your curioſity interrupt your happineſs: all that Nature can give you is in the valley of Irwan: here you are cheriſhed by the eye of affection, and indulged with all the bounties of the eternal ſun. Travel is often dangerous, and always inconvenient: your knowledge of men may be purchaſed by experiencing their treachery, their cruelty and their pride; the unſuſpected innocence of your heart will expoſe you to the deſigns of the ſelfiſh, and the inſolence of the vain: you will wander from place to place, only for amuſement: as your heart can have no connections that time or intereſt have rendered dear to you, you will be little affected by any thing you ſee; and what is more than all, your virtue will be endangered. When you behold the univerſal prevalence of vice, when your eye is attracted by the flowry paths in which ſhe ſeems to tread, you will find it difficult to withſtand the force of example, and the blandiſhments of pleaſure.'

 Solyman

Solyman humbled himſelf, and replied, 'Prince of the ſages that dwell between the rivers, let your ear be patient to the words of youth. Can Ardavan doubt the integrity of the heart which his precepts have formed to virtue; or fear that Solyman ſhould become the ſlave of vice? I am not a ſtranger to the manners of men, though I have mixed but little among them; nor am I unacquainted with the temptations to which I ſhall be expoſed, nor unprepared to withſtand them. Travel may be attended with ſome inconveniences, but it has many advantages. Next to the knowledge of ourſelves, moſt valuable is the knowledge of nature; and this is to be acquired only by attending her through the variety of her works; the more we behold of theſe, the more our ideas are enlarged and extended; and the nobler and more worthy conceptions we muſt entertain of that power, who is the parent of univerſal being.'

'My ſon,' ſaid Ardavan, 'if you are determined to travel, let your ear attend to the inſtruction of age. Move not one pace from the valley of Irwan, if your heart rely not on the Eternal Providence: it is that confidence alone which muſt ſupport you under all the poſſible contingencies of diſtreſs: O let it not depart from you; it is the ſovereign antidote to the evils of life. The day is not lighted up in vain, let it not paſs without the practice of virtue; dare not to behold the everlaſting ſun go down, if thou haſt waſted his light in idleneſs or in vanity: ignorance, miſery, or want, will always afford thee the means of beneficence.

'May that Immortal Being, whoſe eye is over all his creatures, ſave thee from folly and from vice! May his hand direct thee in the hour of negligence, and his ſpirit guide thee through the maze of error! When thy mind ſhall be enriched with the knowledge of his works, may he reſtore thee, more virtuous, to the valley of Irwan, to the arms of thy aged father! and may he forgive this tear, which proceeds not from a diſtruſt of his Providence, but falls for the loſs of Solyman!'

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

THE morning was ſpread upon the mountains, and Solyman prepared to depart: but firſt proſtrating himſelf towards the ſun, he thus addreſſed that glorious luminary. 'Incomparable, and everlaſting! Thou, that lighteſt up a thouſand worlds, and extendeſt thy protecting power to the minuteſt parts of nature! let thy univerſal eye look with favour upon Solyman. When I wander over the waſtes of deſolation, may thy cheerful rays comfort and ſupport me! when I go into the cities of men, mayeſt thou ſtill look upon me; teach me to diſcover the dark deſigns of malignity, and to unfold the intricacies of fraud! So mayeſt thou riſe with ſeven fold luſtre over the waves of Indus; ſo mayeſt thou be adored by thoſe ſavage nations who experience thy goodneſs without acknowledgment!' After this ſhort addreſs, he ſung the following hymn.

HYMN TO THE RISING SUN.

From the red wave riſing bright,
Lift on high thy golden head;
O'er the miſty mountain ſpread
Thy ſmiling rays of orient light!

See the golden God appear!
Flies the fiend of darkneſs drear;
Flies, and in her gloomy train,
Sable Grief, and Care, and Pain!

See the golden God advance!
On Taurus' heights his courſers prance:
With him haſte the vernal hours,
Breathing ſweets and dropping flowers.

Laughing Summer at his ſide,
Waves her locks in roſy pride;
And Autumn bland, with aſpect kind,
Bears his golden ſheaf behind.

O haſte, and ſpread the purple day
O'er all the wide ethereal way!

Nature

Nature mourns at thy delay :
God of glory, haſte away !

From the red wave riſing bright,
Lift on high thy golden head ;
O'er the miſty mountain ſpread
Thy ſmiling rays of orient light !

When Solyman had finiſhed his devotions, he paſſed over the Tigris into the kingdom of Perſia.

There is ſome ſecret attraction in the place where we have paſſed the cheerful innocence of childhood, that holds our heart to it during the remaining part of life. No ſooner had Solyman aſcended an eminence that gave him a retroſpective view of the valley of Irwan, than he turned his eye on his native fields, and gazed for ſome time with a kind of penſive complacency. 'Happy ſcenes,' ſaid he, 'where I have beheld the everlaſting ſun ſo often riſe and ſet! Yonder is the grove where I repoſed at noon; and that is the hill where I muſed at eve. In yon manſion I firſt drew the breath of heaven; and there, perhaps, Ardavan may yet be weeping for my departure.'

The gentle heart of Solyman thus indulged itſelf a while, till the declining day called upon him to proceed.

CHAP. III.

WHEN he had reached the foot of Taurus, the ſhadows of evening fell from the mountains; he therefore ſought to repoſe himſelf in the village of Abdat: but as he was advancing towards it, he was ſtopped by an exclamation of ſorrow, that proceeded from an adjacent wood. As he was in hopes of relieving ſome diſtreſs, he ſcrupled not to draw near enough to liſten; and ſoon diſcovered, that the perſons he heard ſpeaking were two lovers, who had ſtolen a ſecret interview before their final ſeparation.

The heart of Solyman had never felt the paſſion of love; and he was, therefore, the more curious to ſee the effects of it. But how great was his aſtoniſhment, when

when, as he approached the place from whence the voices came, he beheld the lover lying, in all the agonies of sorrow, at the feet of his weeping mistress!

'Immortal Power,' said Solyman, 'I have been told that love was the best of thy gifts: is this miserable, this painful sight a proof of it? Behold that wretched youth, how his heart labours and struggles under its oppression; while the amiable maiden, who seems to be the cause of his misery, hangs over him in tears and silence, as if incapable of relieving him. Heavens, what agonies! Reason will be driven from her seat. Ha! nature gives place; he faints!'

Solyman perceiving his assistance was now become necessary, rushed into the thicket, and raised the unhappy lover from the earth. At length his senses returned; but his grief, which had before been so exquisitely violent, was changed into gloomy stupidity. Solyman, however, by the soothing sounds of pity, awoke his attention, and, by gentle importunity, drew from him the cause of his distress.

'Stranger,' said the youth, 'whoever thou art, thine appearance entitles thee to regard; and the compassion thou hast shewn me merits my confidence. Thou now beholdest the most unhappy of men. That lady, at whose feet I so lately lay insensible, is the daughter of a mercenary wretch, who has sold her to the Khan of Bukharia; and to-morrow she is to be conveyed to him, without expostulation or reprieve.'

'What,' replied Solyman, 'is it possible, that any thing can induce a parent to make his child miserable! I was not ignorant of the depravity of man; but I thought the affections of nature could not have been overcome. Yet if it is so, can there be any obligation on the child to take the portion of misery that her parent holds out to her? The obligation of children to parents can only be founded in gratitude; and where no favour is shewn, no gratitude can be due. It is impossible that, in any circumstances, you should be more miserable; but it is very possible that you may be happier. Fly, while the moments

ments of liberty remain: and let not thoſe hearts which heaven has formed for each other be ſeparated by man. The roof of Ardavan has always been a refuge to innocence in diſtreſs. I will myſelf conduct you to the valley of Irwan, where my father's venerable character, and the retired ſituation of his abode, will ſecure you from detection; and I ſhall rejoice to be the means of delivering you from miſery.'

This offer was too intereſting to be refuſed. The lovers put themſelves under the conduct of Solyman; and he now repaſſed the roads he had travelled by the light of the ſun, with ſuperior pleaſure even in the gloom of night; ſo delightful is beneficence to a virtuous mind!

When the morning began to appear, they had reached the banks of the Tigris. 'It will not be neceſſary,' ſaid Solyman, 'that I ſhould attend you further: yonder is the valley of Irwan, and the houſe of Ardavan. To know that you are unhappy, will be a ſufficient motive for him to receive you; and your ſtory will procure you his protection. I will now take leave of you, becauſe I would not again take leave of my father. Tell him, that I recommend you to his care: he will rejoice to hear that Solyman has been the means of your happineſs: but tell him not that I returned to the banks of the Tigris.' Having thus parted with the lovers, he proceeded on his journey, and in five days arrived at Iſaphan.

The beauty and magnificence of that extenſive city engaged his attention for many days. He was now aſtoniſhed at the ſtupendous effects of induſty, and now delighted by the elegance of art. But by theſe he thought himſelf rather amuſed than inſtructed; and he perceived that day after day departed from him, without being diſtinguiſhed either by the acquiſition of knowledge, or the practice of virtue: he therefore frequented the places of public reſort, and endeavoured to form ſuch connexions as were moſt likely to promote both.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

AMONG thofe whofe converfation he found moft inftructive and entertaining, he was particularly fond of an Englifh merchant, who had refided fome time at Ifaphan, and fpoke the language of the country. The merchant alfo perceiving in Solyman a fuperior underftanding, and a benevolent heart, was delighted with his company, and cultivated his friendfhip. They frequently met; and their converfation generally turning on the manners and purfuits of men, they mutually gratified each other by accounts of their different countries.

'You,' faid Solyman, 'have enjoyed the advantages which I am ftill to procure. You have feen many different parts of the world, and can form a collective idea of its inhabitants; your commercial engagements muft have led you much into the interefts and defigns of men; and you muft, confequently, be well acquainted with the prevailing propenfities of the heart. But I fhould be particularly obliged to you for an account of your own country, of which I have yet had but an imperfect defcription.'

'The difference of men,' faid the merchant, 'lies only in their complexion and manners; their principles are the fame in all ages, and in all climates; and felf-intereft is the prevailing principle, from Indus to the Thames. I am not, however, fuch a fchool philofopher, as to think that the whole human fpecies fhould come under this conclufion: I have experienced the delights of friendfhip, and the confolations of benevolence, where intereft was no motive. I have even known many who have contributed to remove the miferies of their fellow creatures, tho' by the diminution of their own fortune. That excellent, that truly ufeful fpirit of munificence, in a particular manner characterizes my countrymen. Where you, my friend, in the metropolis of Great Britain, you would behold fpacious edifices erected for helplefs indigence; and find the fame fkill and care employed for the health and the lives of the poor, that the

the moſt affluent circumſtances can procure for the rich. But munificence is not the only ornament that diſtinguiſhes my country: there too dwell liberty and juſtice: liberty, that, however ſtrange it may ſeem to you, delights in the protection of a monarch; and juſtice, which he cauſes to be adminiſtered without partiality. The greateſt Baſſa in Great Britain cannot invade either the life or the property of the meaneſt ſubject with impunity: he is equally amenable to the laws, and would ſuffer indiſcriminately with the moſt obſcure malefactor.

'This general ſecurity of property and life excites an unwearied ſpirit of induſtry, and diſperſes the ſons of commerce over the remoteſt regions of the earth. Hence, my friend, we viſit the towers of Iſaphan, and the gulph of Baſſora: our ſails are ſtretched from the moſt diſtant iſlands of the Atlantic to the ſhores of Japan: and London is ſupplied with all the luxuries of nature, and all the labours of art.'

'You give me,' ſaid Solyman, 'a very magnificent, and a very pleaſing idea of your country. But will not commerce, as it enriches the people, corrupt their manners? Will unbounded affluence produce neither riot nor debauchery, vanity nor pride? The inhabitants of Great Britain may be more ſplendid and luxurious; but the dwellers in Meſopotamia are, perhaps, happier, in proportion as they are more innocent: for Ardavan, my father, has frequently told me, that wealth corrupts the heart of man.

'All the good things of life,' anſwered the merchant, 'are complicated with evils. If wealth be not deſirable becauſe it may lead us into luxury, or inflame us with pride; no more would the ſanguine cheerfulneſs of health, leſt it ſhould betray us into licentiouſneſs. There are, it is to be feared, many, whoſe manners are depraved by riches; but there are likewiſe many, who employ them in the diffuſion of knowledge, or the relief of indigence.

'Theſe,' ſaid Solyman, 'are glorious ends; and would almoſt excite me to turn merchant, for the acquiſition

quisition of wealth. But give me some account of the literature of your country.'

'Of that,' replied the merchant, 'I am scarce a competent judge, the greatest part of my time having been employed in commercial studies. I am not, however, wholly unacquainted with it; for I have always thought, that a merchant should not neglect the accomplishments of a gentleman. The present state of literature in Great Britain will be best seen, by considering the performances of the learned in their respective classes. We have but few historians of real merit; either their style is slovenly and unharmonions, or their matter undigested and confused; they are either the tools of a faction, or the slaves of a bookseller. But I have had the pleasure of hearing, since I came to Isaphan, that the histories of England and Scotland, the two divisions of Great Britain, have lately been written with considerable spirit, accuracy, and elegance. As to the histories of other countries, which have been published in Great Britain, they are such meer compilations, that they deserve not to be called the labours of art.'

'From this account of your historians,' said Solyman, 'I cannot entertain any great idea of them; but what are your orators?'

'As to rhetorical writings,' answered the Merchant, 'we have many that are truly excellent; spirited and elevated in sentiment, in language harmonious and correct: but the powers of composition are rendered inefficacious by a spiritless pronunciation. The art of public speaking, however important in itself, seems entirely to be neglected; and the orator pronounces his discourse from the rostrum with as little feeling himself, and as little influence upon his audience, as if he were reading the newspaper of the day.'

'Then, I suppose,' said Solyman, 'that your orators speak on unaffecting or uninteresting subjects.'

'That is not the case,' replied the Merchants: 'The subjects they treat are of the last importance; the duties we owe the Supreme Being, the dispensations of his pro-

 vidence,

vidence, the eternal obligations of morality, the charms of virtue, and the delightful exercifes of juftice, mercy, and charity.'

'Holy Mithra!' interrupted Solyman, 'can the fpeakers be unaffected while they are treating thefe fubjects? Do they then think them of that importance they really are? or do your teachers difbelieve and difregard their own doctrines? or are they unconcerned what effect they may have upon the people?

'It would be uncharitable,' faid the Merchant, 'to admit generally any of thefe fuppofitions. Their unanimated and unawakening manner of fpeaking, may proceed from innocent caufes, which thofe you mention are not.'

'I take it for granted,' faid Solyman, 'that as you have orators, at leaft in point of compofition, you have alfo poets; for rhetoric and poetry are nearly allied. Befides, I have been informed, that every country has its poets; and that even on the frozen mountains of the north, the hardy inhabitants open their mouths to fing.'

'The love of harmony,' replied the Merchant, 'is in man a natural paffion. There is fomething metrical and numerous in his motions, his actions, and his words; and he has always endeavoured to reduce the laft to a kind of poetical meafure, even where the art of writing was unknown or unpractifed. The art of poetry in Great Britain has, of late years, been brought to great perfection. The language of the country is both nervous and harmonious, and calculated to exprefs the tender and the fublime; in both which fpecies of writing we have poets that have never been excelled. Though the Englifh are, in general, of a lefs fprightly turn than their neighbours the French; yet, in the active powers of imagination, in the flights of fancy, and the ftrains of humour, their writings are by no means inferior. Hence the Englifh poetry is not only harmonious, but fentimental and picturefque; abounding with ftrong images, and lively defcription. In fhort, my countrymen have

attempted

attempted every different ſpecies of poetry, and have excelled in each.'

'The account you give me of your poetry,' ſaid Solyman, 'makes me very deſirous to learn your language. There is no ſpecies of writing that gives me equal pleaſure; I caught the enthuſiaſm from nature, from the harmony and ſymmetry of her works. If you, who have ſo long been accuſtomed to the elegance of the Engliſh, can bear a ſpecimen of the Meſpotamian poetry, I will repeat to you a performance of my own.'

A FAREWEL HYMN TO THE VALLEY OF IRWAN.

Farewel the fields of Irwan's vale,
My infant years where Fancy led;
And ſooth'd me with the weſtern gale,
Her wild dreams waving round my head,
While the blythe blackbird told his tale.
Farewel the fields of Irwan's vale!

The primroſe on the valley's ſide,
The green thyme on the mountain's head,
The wanton roſe, the daiſy pied,
The wilding's bloſſom bluſhing red,
No longer I their ſweets inhale.
Farewel the fields of Irwan's vale!

How oft within yon vacant ſhade
Has ev'ning clos'd my careleſs eye!
How oft along thoſe banks I've ſtray'd,
And watch'd the wave that wander'd by!
Full long their loſs ſhall I bewail.
Farewel the fields of Irwan's vale!

Yet ſtill, within yon vacant grove,
To mark the cloſe of parting day;
Along yon flow'ry banks to rove,
And watch the wave that winds away;
Fair Fancy ſure ſhall never fail,
Though far from theſe, and Irwan's vale.

CHAP. V.

IN this ſocial intercourſe the Merchant paſſed many days with Solyman, and, while he gratified his curioſity, engaged his affections. Being ſuddenly called by buſineſs to the court of Baſſora, he came one morning to take a final leave; but the traveller was too much attached to his friend to ſuffer any thing but neceſſity to part them. 'Permit me, ſaid he, 'to attend you on your preſent expedition. I have not appointed to myſelf any particular rout, but travel as occaſion or inclination leads me; and I am ſenſible I ſhall gain more from your experience and obſervation, than I can from my own.'

This offer was too agreeable to the Merchant, not to be eagerly embraced; and after the neceſſary preparations, they ſet out from Iſaphan, and met the morning on the mountains of Arvan.

The ſun appeared above the horizon, and Solyman proſtrated himſelf in the profoundeſt adoration. When he roſe from his devotions, he advanced towards his fellow traveller, with a look of kindneſs mixed with pity and concern. The Merchant underſtood him: but, as he was unwilling to controvert the principles of his religion, he made no apology for his conduct during the devotions of Solyman.

The mild morning light, which was diffuſed over the vallies and ſtreams, the various beauty of the meadows, the regular diſpoſition of bloſſomed hedge rows, the ſoothing murmurs of bees at their early labour, and the full concert of the feathered creation, drew their converſation on the univerſal beneficence of nature.

'I feel,' ſaid Solyman, 'a delight which I can neither account for nor deſcribe. Theſe mountains, gilded with the rays of the orient Sun; thoſe painted vallies, that ſhame the rich carpets of Perſia; yon diſtant waters, which gleam with the ſhifting effulgence of light; the general buſy voice of joy and activity in the animal creation,

creation,

creation, conſpire to fill my heart with inexpreſſible pleaſure.'

'That pleaſure,' replied the Merchant, 'I believe, proceeds from ſympathy. It is ſcarce poſſible, unleſs you have ſome peculiar cauſe of miſery, not to be pleaſed when you ſee every thing around you happy. On the countrary, if you go into the manſions of ſorrow, it will be impoſſible to withſtand the infection of it. The God of nature ſeems to have given us theſe ſympathetic feelings, to link our affections in the great chain of ſociety: hence ſocial virtue is not left to depend ſolely on the moral will, but is founded on the principles of our nature. But the object of your adoration is ſo profuſe of his favours, that I ſhould now be glad to find ſome convenient ſhade. I think I diſcover a cave on the ſouthern declivity of the mountain; let us retire to it during the heat of the day.'

As they were advancing towards the cave, they perceived a beaten path leading directly from it to a diſtant rivulet: this made them apprehenſive that it might be the habitation of ſome wild beaſt, that had worn the path by conſtantly going to drink at the ſtream: but their fears were ſoon removed upon the appearance of an aged hermit, advancing ſlowly towards the rivulet with an earthern pitcher. At ſight of the travellers, he haſted to his abode with all the feeble precipitancy of age. They agreed not to diſturb him; and only took the advantage of the rock which projected over his cell to ſhelter themſelves from the ſun; but they had not long continued in this ſituation, before the hermit, perceiving them to be inoffenſive travellers, invited them into his cave.

'You will excuſe,' ſaid the hoary ſage, 'the caution of years. Theſe mountains are not ſecure from the ravage of human ferocity; and theſe grey hairs would be no defence from the wanton cruelty of man. I have ſuffered ſo much from my own ſpecies, that I have at laſt forſaken their ſociety: I thought it better to give up the conveniencies of it, than to bear the evils: and I have

have long lived in this ſolitary cave, on nothing more than what uncultivated nature would afford me.'

'Thoſe ſufferings,' ſaid Solyman, 'muſt, indeed, have been extraordinary, that could make you give up one of the greateſt advantages of life, the ſocial intercourſe of your fellow creatures.'

'The narratives of age,' replied the hermit, 'are ſeldom agreeable to youth: but as inſtruction can be gained only from experience, you will do wiſely to learn it from the misfortunes of Abbas.'

'I was born to a competent fortune in the province of Lureſtan: but, being early left an orphan, my affairs came under the cognizance of a juſticiary court, which the members of it call the court of equity; but ſo equitable were they with regard to me, that they claimed two parts of my little fortune for their care of the third.'

'Would to God that were never the caſe in Great Britain,' interrupted the merchant; 'But proceed.'

'Though I had ſuch an early and convincing proof of the treachery and rapacity of mankind, yet, as I had always exerciſed the benevolent virtues myſelf, I could not think others totally devoid of them; and at my three and twentieth year, being inclined to travel, I, without ſcruple, entruſted the remains of my fortune with a perſon whom I had long known and reſpected; a perſon, Holy Allah! who lifted his hands to thee: but I had not been abſent from Lureſtan more than three moons, when he pretended a commiſſion to diſpoſe of my effects, and immediately left the place. Upon my return, therefore, to the province, I found neither friend nor fortune; and, being bred to no buſineſs, I was reduced to the moſt diſtreſsful ſtate of indigence. I applied, however, not without hopes of redreſs or relief, to a perſon of power and eminence, whom I had often heard ſpeak of his friendſhip with my father. After long and frequent attendance, I was admitted to an interview. I laid open my diſtreſs to him with that kind of eloquence which the miſeries we ſuffer from the treachery of others always ſuggeſts; and which, however unaffecting it may

may be to indifferent perſons, utters its complaints with dignity and reſentment. I was heard half way through my ſtory, and diſmiſſed with the following reply: "It is not neceſſary, young man, to proceed with your complaints; I perceive you have been abuſed, and I am ſorry for you. But that ſhall not be the only proof of my regard for you; I will give you a little advice: you ſhould never depend ſo much on the benevolence or integrity of any human being, as to truſt him with your fortune or your life." 'Thus ended my hopes from the friend of my father; whoſe benevolence extended no further than to inſtruct me how to ſecure the fortune that was ſtolen, and to preſerve the life which I wiſhed to loſe.

'I had now no choice, but to enter, as a common ſoldier, into the army of the Sophi. I had always delighted in martial exerciſes, and was expert in the uſe of arms. My dexterity and addreſs drew upon me the attention of my officers; and, in a ſhort time, I obtained a ſmall commiſſion. I had now almoſt forgot my miſeries, and embraced my new ſituation with cheerfulneſs and hope: but fortune, who had for a while ceaſed to perſecute me, as below her notice, as if ſhe had been indignant at my ſatisfaction, and jealous of my proſpects, now renewed and redoubled her ſeverity.

'My commanding officer had a daughter of extraordinary beauty, and an uncommon capacity. Zara was the object of univerſal admiration: but ſhe had ſet her heart on the unfortunate Abbas. The firſt moment I beheld her, I diſcovered in her looks the moſt tender and affectionate regard for me, which I imputed to her compaſſion for my misfortunes; though at the ſame time I wiſhed, without knowing why, that it might proceed from another cauſe. She aſked me for the hiſtory of my life: I told it in the plaineſt and moſt pathetic manner; yet, when I had finiſhed, ſhe deſired me to repeat it. From this moment I had done with peace: her infectious tenderneſs had ſuch an influence upon my heart, that I could think of nothing but Zara: without Zara I was miſerable.

miserable. A thousand times did I flatter myself, that there was something more than mere compassion in her look and manner; and not many days had passed, before I was convinced of the dear fatal truth from this letter:

"To Abbas.

"Your merit and your sufferings have a claim to "something more than compassion: To espouse the "cause of Abbas, is to discharge a duty which virtue "cannot dispense with. Meet me on the parade this "evening, and you shall know more of the sentiments of

"Zara."

'The emotions I felt on the receipt of this letter, can only be conceived by those, who, in the midst of despairing love, have beheld a gleam of hope. The tumult of my heart hurried me to the place appointed long before the time: I walked backward and forward in the utmost confusion, totally regardless of every object about me; sometimes raising my hands and eyes in the sudden effusions of transport, and sometimes smiling with the complacency of delight.

'At length the day departed, and Zara came. My heart bounded at her sight: I was unable to speak, and threw myself at her feet. She was alarmed at my excessive earnestness and confusion; but commanding me to rise, "Abbas," said she, "if your confusion proceeds from your modest gratitude, restrain it, till you find whether I am able to serve you; if it arise from any other cause, I must leave you this moment." 'I entreated she would tell me, to what I was indebted for the happiness of this interview, and I would be calm and attentive. "My regard for your merit, and my compassion for your sufferings," said she, "make me wish to serve you. Tell me, Abbas, can I assist you through the interest of my father?" 'I faultered out my ackowledgments; telling her, that to her I must owe all my hopes of future happiness.

She

'She left me immediately without reply. The ſingularity of my behaviour on the parade, before the coming of Zara, had drawn upon me the attention of an officer who was ſecretly her admirer, and who, either through curioſity or ſuſpicion, though unobſerved by me, had waited at a convenient diſtance to watch my motions. No ſoooer did he perceive the approach of Zara, than, as well to gratify his revenge, as to ingratiate himſelf with her father, he immediately told him of our interview.'

CHAP. VI.

'ZARA, ignorant of what had paſſed, with her uſual freedom and good-nature, began to expreſs her compaſſion for the misfortunes of Abbas, talked of his merits, and wiſhed to ſee him preferred. The old general, who was naturally jealous and impetuous, exclaimed, with a burſt of indignation, "Yes, I ſhall prefer him!" 'Early the next morning he ſent me my diſcharge; and while I was gazing in ſtupid aſtoniſhment upon my general's letter, a youth, maſked, brought me a ſmall caſket, with a letter from Zara, which, to the beſt of my remembrance, was as follows:

"To Abbas.

"By ſome unlucky circumſtance, which I do not
"now underſtand, inſtead of promoting you, I have
"been the cauſe of your diſmiſſion. The bearer, who
"brings you a ſmall caſket of jewels for your ſupport,
"has my commands to conduct you the ſhorteſt way
"over the mountains: follow him immediately, leſt the
"rage of jealouſy meditate new perſecutions. He wears
"a maſk, that he may not be taken notice of as one of
"the general's domeſtics; his attachment to me will
"make him faithful to you. Time may bring about
"happier events. Adieu, adieu!

"Zara."

'In the anguiſh and confuſion of my heart, I followed my guide without knowing whither he was leading me, or

or what I was about to do. I vented my grief in broken ejaculations, frequently calling upon the name of Zara, but not once addreſſing myſelf to my attendant. By the evening of the ſecond day, we had advanced forty miles ſouthward from the province of Lureſtan; when—how ſhall I relate the laſt horrid ſcene of my miſeries!—pardon me!—theſe aged eyes have yet a tear left, yet a tear for the memory of Zara!—we were attacked by a band of robbers. My guide was Zara! In her fright, ſhe threw off her maſk, and cried, Zara. Love, rage, fear, and vengeance, gave me ſupernatural ſtrength: three of the villains fell by my ſabre; a fourth diſarmed me; and the reſt of the gang carried off Zara.'

At this criſis of his ſtory, the ſpirits of the aged Hermit were exhauſted by their own violence; and it was ſome time before he could proceed.

'You have now,' continued he, 'heard the completion of my misfortunes. When I was recovered of the wounds I had received, I ſpent ſome months in a fruitleſs ſearch of Zara. At laſt, deſpairing to gain any intelligence of her, I tranſmitted an account of the affair to her father; not without hope, that his power, or his wealth, might be a means of finding her out, and redeeming her: but I was deceived; and had ſoon the mortification to hear, that the unnatural wretch exulted in our misfortunes, and uttered the moſt dreadful imprecations on his only child.

'Deprived of hope, and dejected with melancholy, I could no longer bear the ſociety of mankind: I therefore betook myſelf to theſe ſolitary mountains, where this cell has been my habitation for years, that have paſſed away in unvaried ſorrow; and where you are the firſt of human beings that have heard me tell my tale.'

CHAP. VII.

SOLYMAN expatiated on the ſufferings of Abbas with the moſt tender ſenſibility, and inveighed againſt the baſeneſs of mankind with all the rage of honeſt reſentment. 'Surely, ſaid he to the merchant, 'man is the vileſt of all creatures! In proportion as he excèls them in reaſon, he exceeds them in the ability to do miſchief; and being equally cruel, the miſchief he does renders him more deteſtable. Sacred Mithra! why doſt thou lend thy light to the villain and the tyrant? Were it not for the enjoyment of your company, my friend, I ſhould have few inducements to go farther from the valley of Irwan; for poſſibly to ſee more of human life, is only to know more of its crimes and miſeries.'

'From the complicated diſtreſſes of one perſon,' replied the merchant, 'you draw a partial image of the life of man. But the day dęclines: let us haſten over theſe mountains, that we may repoſe at night in ſome village of the valley.' The travellers took leave of the Hermit; and about the cloſe of day arrived at the village of Arden.

At their entrance they were met by a perſon of a plain dreſs, and a cheerful countenance, who, without ceremony, invited them, as travellers, to partake of his houſe and table that night. They accepted his invitation; and the merchant, addreſſing himſelf to Solyman, ſaid, 'From the family of this man, you ſhall not only be convinced, that there is both happineſs and virtue in human life, but you ſhall ſee alſo, how much the former depends upon the latter. I have been entertained by him in travelling this way before: he is never more happy than when he has an opportunity of gratifying his benevolence. His inheritance being much leſſened by the loſſes of his father, who was a merchant, he has but little wealth, except what ariſes from the induſtrious cultivation of a farm, which he purchaſed ten years ago with the chief part of his fortune; yet he is as liberal to the

the poor and the ſtranger as if he had large poſſeſſions: his known hoſpitality and generoſity make his houſe the reſort of the traveller and the indigent; and, after he has finiſhed the labours of the day, he is always ready to entertain the one, and relieve the other; hence that ſerene and eaſy cheerfulneſs which you ſee in his countenance. In his family you behold the influence of a good example. His wife, whom he loves, and by whom he is beloved with the moſt cordial ſincerity, goes hand in hand with him, not only through their mutual cares, but alſo in the exerciſes of benevolence. It is the principle of her œconomy, that domeſtic frugality is the ſupport of liberality; and ſhe diſpenſes her own and her huſband's bounties with that propriety and eaſy cheerfulneſs which double their value to the receiver. The children inherit the benevolence of their parents, and learn the exerciſe of it from their example. Bye and bye they will crowd round your ſofa ſolicitous to ſerve you: you ſhall ſee them preventing your wants, and watching your requeſts, with a buſy emulation which ſhall do you the moſt ſervices.'

Solyman liſtened with delight to this deſcription of the villager's family; and haſted, with the moſt ardent curioſity, to behold that virtue he ſo much admired. When he found that every thing exceeded the merchant's account, and his own expectation, 'It is enough,' ſaid he; 'I am again reconciled to my own ſpecies. Notwithſtanding the impreſſion I received from the ſtory of the unfortunate Abbas, virtue has yet her temples among men; but ſurely ſhe is a villager, and her votaries are the inhabitants of the fields!' Full of theſe thoughts, and delighted with the family of his hoſt, he retired to his chamber, and, before he ſlept, compoſed the following ode.

THE HAPPY VILLAGER.

Virtue dwells in Arden's vale:
There her hallowed temples riſe;
There her incenſe greet the ſkies,
Grateful as the morning gale!

There

There with humble peace and her
Lives the happy villager;
There the golden ſmiles of morn
Brighter every field adorn;
There the ſun's declining ray
Fairer paints the parting day:
There the woodlark louder ſings,
Zephyr moves on ſofter wings,
Groves in greener honours riſe,
Purer azure ſpreads the ſkies;
There the fountains clearer flow,
Flowers in brighter beauty blow;
For, with peace and virtue, there
Lives the happy villager!

Diſtant ſtill from Arden's vale
Are the woes the bad bewail;
Diſtant fell Remorſe, and Pain,
And Phrenzy, ſmiling o'er her chain!
Grief's quick pang, Deſpair's dead groan,
Are in Arden's vale unknown:
For, with peace and virtue, there
Lives the happy villager!
In his hoſpitable cell,
Love, and Truth, and Freedom dwell;
And, with aſpect mild and free,
The graceful nymph, Simplicity.
Hail, ye liberal graces, hail!
Natives all of Arden's vale:
For, with peace and virtue, there
Lives the happy villager!

CHAP. VIII.

WHEN the dawn of the morning broke, Solyman and the merchant, with the moſt grateful acknowledgments of the hoſpitality with which they had been entertained, left the village of Arden, followed by the kind wiſhes of their hoſt and his amiable family. They travelled for ſome days through the ſouthern provinces of Perſia, without any remarkable occurrence, or any other entertainment, than ſuch as could be found in the diverſity of proſpects, and the different labours of men. Sometimes they amuſed themſelves with the contemplation of thoſe places which hiſtory had marked out as the ſcenes of great events; and ſometimes had occaſion to reflect on the periſhable monuments of human magnificence.

The noble plain on which ſtood the once glorious Perſepolis afforded them inexhauſtible matter of curioſity and meditation. This plain, extending about nineteen leagues, abounds every where with villages, and is watered by the great river Araxes. Nature has been ſo induſtrious in the defence of it, that ſhe has raiſed before it mountains that bear all the appearance, and might anſwer the end, of artificial fortifications. From hence the travellers were amuſed with the ruinous remains of many noble edifices, that had once adorned the range of mountains: but when they were come to that part of them which covered the ancient palace of Perſepolis, the ſtupendous ruin ſtruck them with ſilent aſtoniſhment. Porticoes, which had withſtood the aſſaults of time more than two thouſand years; broken columns of different lengths, riſing at conſiderable diſtances within the limits of the ſame pile; ſculptured portals, through whoſe frowning arches the winds paſſed with a hollow murmuring; numberleſs figures engraven on the pilaſters of thoſe portals; and multitudes of hieroglyphics on the different parts of the ſpacious ruin; gave the travellers a mournful and magnificent idea of the priſtine grandeur of this edifice.

The merchant obſerving Solyman to be totally abſorbed in thought, would not interrupt the melancholy pleaſure of his contemplations; but waited, in ſilence, till, with an air of unaffected concern, he thus expreſſed his ſentiments on Perſepolis.

'I am at a loſs, my friend, in the midſt of theſe magnificent ruins, whether I ſhould think more highly, or more meanly, of mankind. Pride raiſed this lofty edifice, and pride deſtroyed it. The vanity of a Cyrus, a Darius, or an Xerxes, adorned thoſe ſuperb columns; and the vanity of an Alexander defaced them. Theſe domes were not reared ſolely for regal magnificence and ſecurity, but to aid the appetites of power and luxury, and to ſecrete the royal pleaſures from thoſe that toiled to gratify them. Thus, as this noble ſtructure was poſſibly raiſed not only for vanity, but for riot, ſo, probably, by vanity, inflamed by riot, it fell: probably, at the requeſt of a ſmiling harlot, the towers of Perſepolis blazed for her diverſion; probably, because the conqueror had taken too large a draught of wine, this palace, the glory of eaſtern art, ſunk to the ground: a ſtriking inſtance of the vanity of human labours, and the depravity of human nature! On the other hand, while I conſider the work of the artiſt; while I am delighted with the ſymmetry and proportion which is yet to be traced through theſe maimed ruins, and ſtruck with the bold relief of the ancient Perſian architecture; I forget the motives both of the erection and demolition of Perſepolis; and admire the induſtry and ingenuity of man, that gave ſuch grace and beauty to theſe maſſy ſtructures.'

'Your ſentiments, ſaid the merchant, are much the ſame with my own. But give me leave now to conduct you to a mountain, about two leagues diſtant from theſe ruins, and ſituated between two of the moſt beautiful plains in the world. This mountain conſiſts of one entire rock, capable of the moſt exquiſite poliſh: it is reduced to form by art, and its ſides are perpendicular; ſo that, at a diſtance, it has the appearance of a wall. Upon this rock are ſeveral pieces of baſs relief, exquiſitely

ſitely performed; in one of which is repreſented a combat between the king of Perſia, and the king of the Indies; the latter of whom, according to the tradition of the times, was ſubdued. There are, beſides, many other figures, of which, though you may not diſcover the deſign, you will be pleaſed with the execution.'

Solyman proceeded with his friend to the mountain much delighted, as well with the extraordinary appearance of the rock, as the uncommon beauty of the plains that were ſpread on either hand beneath, interſperſed with villas ſhaded by trees, extenſive meadows, and paſtures, filled with flocks. When they had gratified their curioſity, and indulged their ſpeculations, they proceeded on their journey, and in a ſhort time arrived at the gulph of Baſſora

The merchant, having here found the veſſel he expected, told Solyman, that if his inclination led him to Europe, he could accommodate him with a convenient paſſage; informing him at the ſame time, that his own affairs would detain him ſome years longer in Perſia.

Solyman, whoſe heart was firmly attached to the merchant, long heſitated between friendſhip and curioſity: however, as he muſt have parted with him had he continued his travels in Aſia, and was not totally without hopes of ſeeing him in what he called the new world, he determined to accept his offer.

CHAP. IX.

AS the ſhip was to remain ſome time in the gulph, Solyman took the opportunity to make the tour of India. In his way he viſited the iſle of Ormus, than which no part of nature wears a more diſmal appearance. Excepting a few houſes, which make the capital of the place, the whole looks like a heath blaſted by lightning, or burnt up by deſign: yet here, in this ſcene of dreary deſolation, Solyman had the mortification to meet with an exile from the city of Iſpahan.

'Surely, ſaid he to the unhappy man, you muſt have been ſo unfortunate as to commit ſome enormous crime, condemned as you are to this miſerable abode!'

'Stranger, replied the exile, I have been unfortunate, but not unjuſt. One day, being at the Perſian court, I told a perſon who ſtood near me, in a low whiſper, that I thought the Sultana Moratte extremely beautiful. This was my crime: and it was the decree of imperial juſtice, that for this I ſhould wear out the remains of life in this dreary ſolitude.'

'Heavens!' ſaid Solyman, 'what madneſs muſt poſſeſs mankind, to lodge unlimited power in the hands of any one human being! When the decrees of juſtice muſt be iſſued by numbers united, there are many means of reſtraining partial or illegal ſentences: ſelf-intereſt, revenge, envy, and every other cauſe of perverting juſtice, would then operate feebly, when oppoſed by public ſhame, divided intereſts, and the open appearance of equity. But what comfort can you receive from uſeleſs declamation? I can help you to the means of deliverance from this wretched priſon; and I think that you are reſtrained by no principle of duty from embracing them; for it is impoſſible that divine power ſhould enforce obedience to the decrees of injuſtice. I am now about to travel through India: at my return, I will again viſit Ormus and you; and if you ſhall be inclined to exchange your priſon for the ſpacious kingdoms of Europe, I will procure you a paſſage thither.'

 The

The exile heard these words with inconceivable transport: he threw himself at the feet of Solyman, and expressed his delight in one emphatical word, crying out, 'Liberty, liberty!' The pleasure of the traveller was scarce inferior to that of the exile. 'Surely, said he to himself, the diffusion of happiness is the highest bliss that the human heart is capable of! I feel more delight in the hope of defeating the malice of injurious power, than in any thing I have ever met with, either before or since the beginning of my travels.'

CHAP. X.

SOLYMAN now left Ormus, and proceeded towards the frontiers of India. Though the country lies nearly in the same climate with the southern provinces of Persia, yet the aspect of it is different; and it is furnished with other kinds of plants and animals, as well as with people of a different complexion and manners. Indeed, nature seems to have made the intercourse of distant nations necessary, by supplying each with some peculiar conveniences.

Solyman passed not through the provinces of the Mogul's empire without instruction, as well as amusement. He was skilled in the natural history of plants and animals; and he found here abundant opportunity to exercise that kind of knowledge. He was often amused by observing how nearly brutal sense borders upon human reason, in the reflecting sagacity of the elephant, and the adroit mischief of the baboon.

Small, however, in comparison, was the pleasure he received from the natural rarities of India, to that which the excellent administration of justice in the several provinces afforded him. The police of that country appeared to him most wisely calculated for the preservation of peace and property; the magistrates, that were appointed to administer justice in their several districts, being obliged to keep persons continually employed to watch the dealings of commerce, and attend both to public and private transactions; for the iniquity of which

themselves

themſelves were to be accountable, and the emperor might always be applied to.

But when he came to Delhi, the capital of the Mogul's empire, his opinion of the Indian policy was much altered. He there had the mortification to find a miniſtry of wives, and a court of concubines, at whoſe diſcretion the principal poſts in the civil and military eſtabliſhments were uſually diſpoſed of; and he who was moſt recommended by his perſon and addreſs, was ſure to obtain the higheſt office in the legiſlature or the army. To find that the bands of muſic at court conſiſted only of women, gave him no diſguſt. 'There,' ſaid the traveller, 'the ladies are in their proper ſphere. Let them cultivate all the ſoft and engaging graces; let them employ themſelves in the embelliſhments of art, and the excurſions of fancy; but let them not interfere in the important concerns of government; nor raiſe thoſe to the places of power, whoſe accompliſhments are ſuited only to their taſte.'

As Solyman was diſpleaſed with the caballing arts of the Indian ladies, ſo he was ſhocked at their inhuman and unnatural ſuperſtition. With horror and amazement did he ſometimes behold a woman, in the bloom of life and beauty, ruſh into the flames, to accompany the manes of her dead huſband: and if nature ſhuddered at the thought of this dreadful ſacrifice, or female ſoftneſs ſhrunk into fear or irreſolution, he beheld a number of diabolical prieſts, with execrable ſcreams, and faces of horror, puſhing forward the poor, trembling, reluctant woman to the burning pile.

' Eternal Mithra! ſaid the afflicted youth, what havock does ſuperſtition make among thy works? When once that fiend enters the human heart, nature and reaſon are driven out; their ſacred lights are wholly extinguiſhed: truth and humanity are trampled upon; and the deteſted fury leads her infatuated votaries, through the horrors of darkneſs, into the arms of death!'

CHAP. XI.

SOLYMAN was the more affected by this infernal custom, as he feared it might one day be the fate of a lady with whom he had contracted an intimate friendship, and for whom he had the most tender regard. This amiable person was a native of Delhi, and her name was Almena. As the houses in which they lodged were contiguous, she first drew his attention by her music, which was her favourite employment, and in which she was greatly skilled. Solyman had a taste for all the fine arts; and after the inquiries and observations of the day, he felt an irresistible pleasure in listening, from his portico, to the evening music of Almena. His heart soon became prejudiced in favour of a lady who had afforded him so much entertainment; and he wished for nothing more than an opportunity of expressing his gratitude.

It was usual for Almena to take a morning walk in the suburbs of Delhi. Solyman observed this, and introduced himself to her conversation, by paying his acknowledgments. There is some secret attraction in congenial natures, which draws them together without the forms of a long acquaintance. Solyman was soon convinced that he discovered in Almena a disposition perfectly suited to his own: her conversation was the picture of a mind enlarged by virtue, and enlightened by learning: she had none of the trifling follies, or the insignificant levity of her sex; yet her manner was animated and cheerful: she had no ebullitions of giddy wit; but her language was the clear and natural image of polished sense, and unaffected knowledge.

Solyman left no means unattempted to cultivate a friendship that promised so much felicity. He constantly attended Almena in her morning walk; and at every interview entertained some new sentiment in her favour. Her heart was not less benevolent than his own. 'You have seen, my friend, said she, almost every thing in Delhi, that is worth the attention of a stranger: but I suppose you do not make it your business, as a traveller, merely

merely to attend to what is uncommon or magnificent, not merely to explore the different operations of nature, and manners of men. Travel muſt afford you many opportunities to relieve the indigent, to comfort the afflicted, to inform the ignorant, or reſcue the oppreſſed. Within the compaſs of my morning walk, there is a village, the inhabitants of which I call my people; they are all poor: to thoſe that are able to labour, I propoſe rewards for the greateſt induſtry; and thoſe who are incapacitated by age or ſickneſs, I take under my own protection.'

It is eaſy to conceive how much Solyman would be delighted with this account of Almena. When he found that, to all the elegant graces of female ſoftneſs, ſhe added the virtues of benevolence, his friendſhip for her was heightened into the moſt refined affection. On the other hand, her regard for Solyman increaſed in proportion as ſhe became acquainted with his improved underſtanding and generous temper; for virtue loves her own image wherever it is found.

CHAP. XII.

SOLYMAN had now paſſed many days at Delhi, in this pleaſing intercourſe of friendſhip; happy to aſſiſt his Almena in the diffuſion of happineſs, charmed with her virtues, and delighted with her converſation. The time, however, approached, when he was to think of his expedition into Europe: but the friendſhip of Almena, bound to his heart by ſtronger ties than that which he had before contracted with the merchant, overbalanced at once every thought of his voyage: he had, therefore, determined to remain at Delhi; when the poor exile at Ormus came into his mind. He ſtarted at the thought, as he would have done at the ghoſt of Ardavan. ''Tis done, ſaid he: adieu to Almena; adieu to the dear delights of her friendſhip, if they muſt be purchaſed at the expence of virtue.'

There is no precept of human wiſdom conceived to be of greater uſe, and therefore none more frequently urged, than

than that we ſhould learn to avoid the evils of life, from the irregularities and misfortunes of others; yet, important as this precept may be, it is, like moſt others, univerſally neglected. We obſerve, indeed, the events of life; and enquire into their cauſes with inſatiable curioſity; but we ſeldom draw any concluſions for the direction of our own conduct. We hear or read only for amuſement; and the ſtory paſſes by without leaving any traces of inſtruction.

Solyman, who, from the firſt ſetting out on his travels, had received the ſtrongeſt convictions of the diſtreſs of love, without the leaſt caution or reſiſtance, ſuffered that paſſion to make its inroads under the appearance of friendſhip; and he now felt all the anguiſh which he had before been a witneſs to near the village of Abdat. Not once, however, did he heſitate between love and virtue: the torrent of his grief for the loſs of Almena, violent as it was, could not bear down his determined integrity.

With a heart full of the moſt piercing ſorrow, he went to take leave of his beloved friend. He reſolved, nevertheleſs, to explain the cauſe of his departure with the moſt ſerene indifference, determined not to affect his Almeda by the appearance of ſorrow: he reſolved; and threw himſelf at her feet in ſpeechleſs anguiſh.

Almena beheld his grief with united ſorrow and ſurprize; and, with tears that flowed from pity and friendſhip, entreated him to diſcover the cauſe of his diſtreſs. ‘It is in vain, Almena, ſaid he; it is in vain any longer to hide my heart from you: nor, indeed, ſhould I act the part of friendſhip to diſſemble its feelings. I, who was yeſterday the happieſt of mankind in the enjoyment of your converſation, am now the moſt miſerable. By the indiſpenſible laws of honour and humanity, I am called from Delhi; but, alas! by the love of Almena I am induced to ſtay. I know, my friend, there is no alternative: but that knowledge is my miſery. I go, then, from you and from happineſs; perhaps never more to enjoy either: but, when I am far from you, it will be

ſome

ſome conſolation to believe, that you will remember the love and the truth of Solyman.'

Almena, as well as the emotions of her heart would give her leave, replied, ' Go, my friend; go where your virtue leads you; and Providence be your guide! Your friendſhip, while I have life, ſhall not he forgotten. No; Almena ſhall always reſpect your memory, and love you with the ſame affection as ſhe does the deareſt of her friends.'

A flood of tears followed theſe words; and Solyman, unable any longer to behold her ſorrow, precipitately withdrew.

CHAP. XIII.

DEPRIVED of that ſerenity which ever waits on conſcious virtue, when free from the great calamities of life, the innocent, the once happy Solyman was now become the child of affliction. He repaſſes the provinces of India in deep melancholy, unaffected by every thing that might excite curioſity, or exerciſe ſpeculation. But, behold the power of virtue! and be convinced, whoever thou art that readeſt this ſtory, that therei nothing equally capable of aleviating the afflictions which are incident to human life.

When he arrived at Ormus, and beheld the joy of the poor exile at the ſight of his deliverer, he felt a torrent of pleaſure in his breaſt, overflowing all the oppoſitions that grief had raiſed againſt it. ' O that Almena, ſaid he, were preſent! that I could communicate to her the happineſs I feel, in reſcuing this poor Perſian from the oppreſſion of tyranny! how would her gentle heart rejoice, and indulge itſelf, with Solyman, in the delights of benevolence! Fate has been ſevere in dividing thoſe whoſe ſouls were made for each other; but it has left me this happineſs, and I enjoy it.'

Solyman was now about to apply to his friend the merchant, who was ſtill upon the coaſt, to procure a paſſage for the exile; but he could not reſiſt the deſire of

writing

writing immediately to Almena; and from Ormus he ſent the following letter.

"To Almena.

"SHALL Solyman be pardoned, if he intrude once
"more on the quiet of Almena? Deareſt, beſt of women,
"I come not to wound thy gentle heart with my com-
"plaints: you ſhall not be told what I have ſuffered ſince
"my departure: no, Almena; you ſhall only know what
"I have enjoyed. The poor exile, whom I mentioned to
"you at Delhi, is ſtill in Ormus. When he perceived me
"from the rocks, on which he uſed to wander daily to
"watch my coming, he flew towards me in an exſtacy of
"joy, crying out, "Liberty! my deliverer! liberty!"
"Here was a ſcene, my friend, that might have over-
"balanced every thing, but the loſs of your company.
"For that, Almena!—forgive me—for that, I muſt yet
"ſhed a tear. Adieu!

"Solyman."

CHAP. XIV.

AFTER the diſmiſſion of this letter, he went immediately to viſit the merchant, who received him with the warmeſt expreſſions of friendſhip. 'Welcome, ſaid he, my valuable friend! whoſe uncommon virtues have made you devote the pleaſurable ſeaſon of life to the acquiſition of knowledge, and the diſtribution of happineſs.'

For the latter of theſe purpoſes, ſaid Solyman, I now wait upon you. In the iſle of Ormus is an unhappy Perſian, whom the capricious cruelty of his prince has condemned to perpetual exile in that diſmal priſon. Were he a criminal, juſtice ſhould have its courſe; I might then have beheld him with pity, but ſhould not have meditated his deliverence: but he is innocent, my friend; he is innocent, and ſuffers. Cannot you aſſiſt me ro effect his eſcape? cannot he have that paſſage to Europe which you obligingly offered me?'

To

'To facilitate the eſcape of an exile, replied the merchant, were as much as my intereſt and ſafety are worth in Perſia. I muſt not be concerned in it: but I will introduce you to a captain of a ſhip, and engage him to ſerve you in every thing you ſhall deſire: after which, if you can take the exile along with you in diſguiſe, or by any other means as your friend or attendant, perhaps he may eſcape without much difficulty or danger. I have diſpatched my buſineſs on the coaſt, and am obliged to return to Iſaphan. Let us now, therefore, if you pleaſe, wait upon the captain.'

Solyman, as he had been in hopes of procuring the exile a paſſage without going himſelf into Europe, from which the friendſhip of Almena had weaned his inclinations, was ſomewhat embarraſſed by this account. However, as he was determined at all events to deliver the poor Perſian, he went immediately to the apartments of the captain, to whom the merchant recommended him as a particular friend, who wanted to make the tour of Europe. The captain received them with the freedom and cheerfulneſs peculiar to his ſtation, and promiſed Solyman the beſt accommodations of his ſhip; but told him, that ſhe muſt remain there a few months before ſhe could get out of the gulph.

Of this delay, though not anſwerable to his impatient wiſhes for the deliverance of the exile, Solyman reſolved to make uſe, in viſiting his father, and the valley of Irwan. As ſoon, therefore, as he had acquainted the exile with what he had to hope, and adviſed him to provide ſecretly for his voyage, and his ſubſiſtence in a diſtant country, he ſailed from the gulph up the Euphrates, as far as where the Tigris empties itſelf into that river, and from thence proceeded by land to the valley of Irwan.

CHAP. XV.

THE venerable Ardavan had aſcended an eminence near his houſe, to enjoy the beauties of the ſummer evening, and to offer up a prayer to the departing ſun for Solyman, when Solyman appeared before him.

What language can paint the emotions of paternal affection! The feeble remains of aged life twice fainted beneath the weight of joy. At length recovering, he cried, 'It is enough—Solyman lives! Heaven has regarded the virtues of my ſon, and reſtored him to the arms of Ardavan.'

Solyman was not leſs affected by this meeting; nor leſs delighted to find his aged parent ſtill enjoying health and reaſon in the decline of life. But his happineſs was allayed with anxiety. He viſited the favourite ſcenes of his native valley in hopes of finding that delight which he thought to be connected with the idea of them; but his imagination was ſtill at Delhi. As love and melancholy are of the ſiſterhood of poetry, he had not been long in the valley before he wrote the following lines.

TO ALMENA, FROM THE BANKS OF THE IRWAN.

Where trembling poplars ſhade their parent vale,
And tune to melody the mountain gale;
Where Irwan murmurs muſically flow,
And breathing breezes through his oſiers blow;
Friend of my heart, behold thy poet laid
In the dear ſilence of his native ſhade!
Ye ſacred vales, where oft the muſe, unſeen,
Led my light ſteps along the moon light green;
Ye ſcenes where peace and fancy held their reign,
For ever lov'd, and once enjoy'd again!
Ah! where is now that nameleſs bliſs refin'd?
That tranquil hour, that vacancy of mind?

As ſweet the wild roſe bares it balmy breaſt;
As ſoon the breeze with murmurs ſooths to reſt;
As ſmooth the ſtream of ſilver Irwan flows;
As fair each flower along his border blows;
Yet dwells not here that nameleſs bliſs refin'd,
That tranquil hour, that vacancy of mind.

Is it that knowledge is allied to woe;
And are we happy, only e'er we know?
Is it that hope withholds her golden ray,
That Fancy's fairy viſions fade away?
Or can I, diſtant far from all that's dear,
Be happy only when Almena's near?
That, truth the feelings of my heart diſcloſe:
Too dear the friendſhip for the friend's repoſe.

Thus mourn'd the muſe, when, thro' his oſiers wild,
The hill-born Irwan rais'd his head, and ſmil'd:
'Child of my hopes,' he fondly cried, 'forbear;
'Nor let thy Irwan witneſs thy deſpair.
'Has peace indeed forſook my flow'ry ſhore?
'Shall Fame, and Hope, and Fancy charm no more?
'Tho' Fame and Hope in kindred air depart,
'Yet Fancy ſtill ſhould hold thee to her heart:
'For at thy birth the village hind has ſeen
'Her light wings waving o'er the ſhadowy green;
'With roſy wreaths ſhe crown'd the new-born hours,
'And rival Faries fill'd thy bed with flowers:
'In vain-- if grief ſhall waſte thy blooming years,
'And life diſſolve in ſolitude and tears------'

Where are the delights of the valley of Irwan, where the flowery variety of its paſtures and meadows, its hills that roſe gradually to meet the morning ſun, and its groves, that ſpread their foliage to exclude the heats of mid-day? Wrapt in the gloom of penſive ſolitude, the ſon of Ardavan was now negligent of theſe, and of all that once delighted or amuſed him. In vain did his father deſire a relation of his travels; and in vain did he begin it: when he attempted to ſpeak of Perſepolis, he gave a deſcription of Delhi; when he was aſked after ſome other place, he mentioned the village of Almena: inſtead of deſcribing the people of India, he deſcribed the perſon of Almena; and when an account of their manners was requeſted, 'her manners, he replied, are ſuch as the immortal Mithra looks down upon with delight.'

CHAP. XVI.

ARDAVAN was now no longer at a loſs to account for the gloomy inconſiſtency of his ſon's behaviour; but, willing to be ſtill more convinced of what he ſuſpected to be the cauſe, he applied to his paſſions the ſtory of thoſe lovers whom he had recommended to his care. At the mention of the lovers, Solyman was rouſed from his melancholy negligence into the moſt eager attention. 'Tell me, my father,' ſaid the impatient youth; 'tell me, I intreat you, the fate of the lovers.'

'I thank you,' replied the ſage, 'for putting it in my power to aſſiſt the unfortunate. From your compaſſion for the ſufferings of theſe lovers, and your attempt to alleviate them, you will feel more ſenſibly the power of the ſame conſolation, when your own heart becomes a prey to the diſtreſſes of love.'

Solyman diſcovered, by his emotions, the effect which this ſhort preface had upon him.

'You know,' continued Ardavan, 'a ſmall building which I erected ſome years ago for a retreat in the ſummer months: you remember its ſituation in the depth of a ſpacious wood, which is only acceſſible by one narrow paſſage, to which I have provided a door, ſo beſet with evergreens, that it is impoſſible for the moſt curious eye to perceive it: the canal of running water in the middle of the wood, and the beautiful graſs-plot, I have extended, ſince you left me, to the ſummer-houſe. To this place I conducted the lovers as ſoon as I had heard their ſtory. There they continued for ſome time, attended by one of my faithful domeſtics, who ſupplied them with every neceſſary; and they were viſited almoſt every day by myſelf. O, my ſon, how exquiſite was the delight to behold the happineſs of this innocent pair, and at the ſame time to conſider myſelf as in ſome meaſure contributing to it! Surely this was to partake of the pleaſures of the deity, which we believe to conſiſt in

his univerſal power of removing evil, and diſpenſing good!

'After ſome time I was informed, that the Khan of Bukharia, who had purchaſed the maiden of her father, was depoſed, and baniſhed by the Sophi. This gave us new hopes; and it was agreed that the youth ſhould return to Abdat, to learn the diſpoſition of the unnatural parent. He accordingly went; and told him that he would endeavour to find his daughter, upon condition he would conſent to their marriage. The wretch, though he was no ſtranger to their mutual paſſion, inſiſted, that no man ſhould ever have his daughter who would not pay the ſame price for her which the Khan of Bukharia had offered.

'As this price far exceeded the ability of the lover, he returned to Irwan, fallen from thoſe pleaſing hopes, which he had ſo lately formed, of enjoying at once his love and his liberty. The father, convinced that his daughter was in the poſſeſſion of the young man, and not now without hopes of recovering her, and offering her again to ſale, hired a ſet of ruffians to watch his return, and to extort from him a confeſſion of the place where ſhe was ſecreted. Of this deſign, however, he was timely apprized by an honeſt villager of Abdat, to whom one of the ruffians had communicated their buſineſs; and he came off in diſguiſe, and eſcaped their notice.

'About two months after, it was reported that the father had died of vexation for the diſappointment of his avaricious views: I, therefore, diſpatched a ſervant to inquire into the truth of this report; and finding it confirmed, conducted the lovers to Abdat without farther apprehenſion. The maiden, who was an only child, inherited her father's fortune, which was very conſiderable; but as great part of it had been amaſſed by oppreſſion, ſhe made reſtitution to thoſe whom his avarice had injured, and ſhe now enjoys the remainder with happineſs and her lover.'

'What you tell me,' ſaid Solyman, 'gives me inexpreſſible ſatisfaction; for the lovers are poſſeſſed of eminent virtue; and to be inſtrumental to the happineſs of virtuous lovers, is the moſt delightful taſk within the province of benevolence. Indeed, thoſe hearts only that are generous and noble, can be capable of the tender ſenſibility of love; for the breaſt which harbours malignity and envy, can never feel the ſympathetic tenderneſs which is the very eſſence of that gentle paſſion.'

'Your obſervation,' replied the ſage, 'may be very juſt; and it is, therefore, the more neceſſary for thoſe to whom nature and the principles of a virtuous education have given the bleſſing of an open heart, to guard againſt the inroads of that paſſion; if there is no probability of an uninterrupted enjoyment of its object, they ſhould look upon its advances, as upon an evil that will deſtroy their peace. The pleaſures of real love are, perhaps, the moſt refined, the moſt delicate and ſenſible, of any that we are capable of enjoying: but, believe me, thoſe are fortunate lovers, who are indemnified by theſe for the many uneaſy hours, the reſtleſs anxieties, and the painful apprehenſions they undergo.'

In theſe general terms did Ardavan deliver his inſtructions to his ſon, who received them with a ſilent conviction of their truth and propriety; and immediately after this converſation, retired to offer up the following prayer to the ſun for Almena.

'Incomparable, and everlaſting! whoſe univerſal eye ſees nothing fairer, nothing more virtuous, than Almena; O let that eye look upon her with the vigilance of a parent. She moſt reſembles thee in the continual exerciſe of beneficence; cheriſh, therefore, thoſe virtues that are congenial with thy own; and let the dear poſſeſſor, through thy benignant influence, enjoy the conſtant bleſſings of health and cheerfulneſs; but if ſome portion of ſorrow be the birth-right of every human being, immortal Mithra! may Almena only ſigh for the abſence of her friend.'

CHAP. XVII.

IN ſuch exerciſes did Solyman employ his retired hours, till the time approached for his return to Ormus. As he was determined, if poſſible, to avoid going into Europe, he made no mention of that circumſtance to his father: his engagements to the exile were a ſufficient reaſon for his departure; and in a ſhort time he arrived at the gulph, and waited upon the Engliſh captain, who was preparing for his voyage. Solyman informed him, that, upon ſome intereſting occaſion, he was obliged to relinquiſh his deſign of viſiting Europe; but that he would recommend a Perſian lady to his care, who was bound for England: and he begged that ſhe might enjoy all the retirement her ſituation could afford. As no objection was made to this propoſal, he privately purchaſed the habit of a Perſian lady, which he concealed ſome days on the coaſt of Ormus; and, under favour of the night, he found no difficulty to procure a boat to the Engliſh veſſel. In a few hours they got under ſail; and having received repeated aſſurances of the captain's care, and engaged the good offices of his crew by a handſome gratuity, he procured a paſſage by ſea to the coaſt of India.

The ſtate of his heart was now very different from what it had been a few days before: he had diſcharged his engagements to the exile with all the ſucceſs that he could wiſh; and his face was now ſet towards Delhi. On he travelled with the eager pace of a lover, and in a few days reached the capital of the Mogul's empire.

The evening he arrived, he flew to the houſe of Almena, who received him with emotions of tenderneſs which ſhe was ſcarcely able to conceal. When the firſt ſalutations were paſſed, ſhe aſked him, how he had diſpoſed of the exile, and why he did not accompany him to Europe, as he had propoſed. He informed her by what means he had procured the exile's eſcape; adding, that from the letters he had written, if ſhe had received them, ſhe might at once ſee the reaſon both of his rejecting the European voyage, and his return to Delhi.

'What

'What would it have availed me,' said he, 'to have visited the distant regions of the universe? What pleasure or amusement could I have expected to find in Europe, when all my heart holds dear was still in Asia? Believe me, this place is now more than the whole world to me; and the friendship of Almena is the only pleasure I can enjoy.'

'I have received your letters,' said she, 'and if they speak the language of your heart, I am no stranger to its feelings. To deal ingenuously with you, I am sensible of your merit, and admire your virtues; and were I not more happy in my present condition, than I could hope to be in any other, I know not the man with whom I would rather divide the enjoyments of life than with Solyman.'

'Is it possible, then,' said Solyman, 'that you can think the condition of celibacy happier than that of marriage? Undoubtedly, the principal happiness of mankind depends on the intercourse of society, and the connexions of friendship: marriage is nothing else but a state of friendship, in which the friends, by uniting their interests, have a constant and uninterrupted enjoyment of each other. Nature aids this union, and reason approves it. Can any condition bid fairer for happiness, than that in which the mutual delights of friendship can only be torn from us by the hand of death?'

'There may be some truth,' answered she, 'in what you observe: but there is an inconstancy in human nature, that makes it dangerous even for two friends to enter into any connexion that cannot be broken; and an unaccountable caprice, that makes us quarrel with our happiness, because we are sure of enjoying it.'

'Were we deterred from every pursuit,' said Solyman, 'by the apprehension of those inconveniences which the foibles and the frailties of our nature might bring upon us, we should never be either virtuous or happy, but might languish away our lives in solitary and unsocial indolence. To avoid the inconveniencies of human inconstancy, marriage is surely the best institution in the world;

world: for what could be more likely to fix the inconſtant, than the habitual intercourſe of kindneſs and good offices; than that gratitude, which is due to the long exerciſe of affectionate tenderneſs; and thoſe dear pledges which muſt depend for happineſs and ſupport on the unanimity of their parents?

'There is, indeed, an inſuperable objection to your being married in India: I mean that contempt of the horrid alternative of torture, which is entailed on the unhappy woman who ſurvives her huſband. But that objection ſhall vaniſh immediately,' continued the lover, with a look of paſſionate earneſtneſs. 'Let us go, my friend, let us go to love and happineſs in the valley of Irwan. That place, which ſo lately afforded a retreat to the lovers whoſe diſtreſſes I have related to you, ſhall then become eternally ſacred to love and friendſhip: that place whoſe beautiful ſcenes I ſo lately beheld with indifference, I ſhall then viſit with rapture. Ecſtacy is in the thought! to enjoy, with Almena, the ſhades of Irwan; with her to walk in my native fields; with her to ſit down on the banks of my favourite ſtream; for her to pluck the flowers whoſe beauty may have drawn her attention; to lead her through thoſe romantic ſcenes that delighted the innocent enthuſiaſm of my childhood; and to ſhew her the more ſolitary retreats which I ſought when her friendſhip had firſt taught me to ſigh!'

Thus Solyman poured out the natural and paſſionate ſenſations of love; and Almena, whoſe heart was far from being indifferent to him, eaſily caught the enthuſiaſm. 'To your honour, and your friendſhip,' ſaid ſhe, 'I can truſt every thing. I am ready to attend you to thoſe ſcenes of which you have given me ſo lively a deſcription: whether they may anſwer it or not, or whatever they may be, the friendſhip of Solyman will make them agreeable.'

It is eaſier to conceive than to expreſs the joy which the lover felt upon this declaration. Within a few days they ſet forward from Delhi, on their journey to the valley of Irwan; and for the greater expedition, and the leſs

fatigue,

fatigue, they determined to go by ſea, and accordingly proceeded to the coaſt, where they went on board a trading veſſel bound for the Perſian gulph.

CHAP. XVIII.

AT that time there was war between two petty princes of the hither peninſula of India; and, unfortunately, the ſhip in which they embarked belonged to one of theſe powers. They had not proceeded above five leagues from the coaſt, when they were purſued by the foe. After an obſtinate and bloody engagement, they were boarded; and their enemies after they had ſtripped the veſſel of every thing valuable, diſmiſſed it.

They diſmiſſed the veſſel, but they took Almena. What heart does not bleed, what eye does not ſhed a tear, for the miſerable Solyman? They diſmiſſed the veſſel, but they took Almena. Prayers, and tears, and agony, and anguiſh, were vain. The lover ſaw his dear, trembling, fainting maid, dragged by the hands of the unfeeling ſailors into their own ſhip, after they had bound him to prevent the effects of his rage. 'I aſk not for your mercy,' cried the wretched youth: 'only take me into your veſſel along with that lady, and prepare your tortures, your racks, and wheels; for me prepare them, and let me periſh before theſe eyes loſe ſight of Almena!'

While Solyman was vainly uttering theſe pitiable exclamations, the enemy ſteered away, and was in a ſhort time out of ſight. The men of the ſhip in which he was, apprehenſive of ſome bad conſequences from the violence of his rage, were prudent enough to let him continue bound; while he now loaded them with the reproachful terms of ſlaves and cowards, and now excited them by promiſes, or intreated them by prayers, to purſue the foe. The ſhip having loſt her freight, did not proceed on her intended voyage, but returned to the coaſt of India.

When they arrived, Solyman was informed, that the veſſel which had taken them belonged to the king of Sundah.

Sundah, who at that time was at war with the king of Kanara. Upon this information, as ſoon as he had received intelligence of the ſituation of the kingdom of Sundah, he went immediately in queſt of Almena. Though almoſt worn to death with fatigue and ſorrow, he travelled night and day, till he reached that country. But alas! when he was there, what could he do? Stranger as he was to the people, and in a great meaſure, to their language, he had as much to hope from chance, as from application, for the diſcovery of Almena.

He would now have ſunk under the weight of his miſfortunes, had he not availed himſelf of the firſt advice of Ardavan, and firmly relied on the eternal Providence. 'Immortal Mithra!' ſaid the afflicted youth; 'thou beholdeſt me oppreſſed with miſery: but thy beams ſtill ſhine upon me; and while I enjoy thy light, I will hope for thy favour!'

Thus comforting himſelf, he ſtill continued his ſearch; depending, for the neceſſary ſupports of nature, on the precarious bounty of the villages through which he paſſed; frequently making the mountain rocks the refuge of his night's repoſe, when nature, exhauſted with toil and ſorrow, in her own defence inclined him to ſleep. He wandered inceſſantly from town to town, and from province to province; often expoſed to the attacks of ſavage beaſts, and often ſuffering the inſults of the more ſavage people.

Having in vain gone over a large tract of the inland country, he now confined his ſearch to the coaſt, in hopes that he might again ſee the veſſel which took his Almena. Day by day he wandered on the beach, conſtantly caſting his eyes on the immenſe waſte of waters, and watching the approach of every veſſel that he ſaw with the ſame impatience of expectation, as if he had been aſſured that it contained Almena.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

AS he was walking one evening by the caſtle of Sevaſir, he heard a mournful voice proceeding from a garden within the fort. Solyman never neglected the voice of ſorrow: he went nearer to the place from whence it ſeemed to proceed; and looking through the iron paliſadoes with which the garden was encompaſſed, he beheld a lady ſitting in a melancholy poſture on a flower-bank at a ſmall diſtance.

In the irreſiſtible tranſport of his heart, he cried aloud, 'Almena!' The lady roſe; and as ſhe came towards him, he preceived his miſtake. 'Pardon me, madam,' ſaid he; I am an unhappy man, who have loſt every thing that is dear to me in a lady, whom I have ſought in vain for many months in this province; where I have ſtill reaſon to believe ſhe is confined, if, indeed, ſhe yet lives; if ſhe has not fallen a ſacrifice to her own miſeries, or to the barbarous cruelty of the villains who tore her from me.'

'Stranger,' ſaid the lady, 'it is long ſince I have known any comfort myſelf, and I am afraid I can have little for you. Your miſeries affect me much: the ſame did my beloved huſband once undergo, for whom I now mourn, and muſt for ever mourn in hopeleſs ſorrow.'

'Is your huſband then dead,' ſaid Solyman; 'or is he only loſt to you, as Almena is to me? If the latter is the caſe, you may yet have hope: the all-ſeeing eye of Providence looks down upon all his creatures, a he will aſſuredly redreſs the misfortunes of the virtuous.'

'We were inhabitants,' replied the lady, 'of the kingdom of Kanara. The Sundians, who made an incurſion into our territories, amongſt many other wretched people, carried off my huſband and me—.'

'How, madam!' interrupted Solyman; 'they were merciful, if they ſuffered your huſband to accompany you.'—'Their mercy,' ſaid ſhe, 'did not extend ſo far: they preſented me to the governor of this caſtle; and my huſband they impriſoned in a diſtant part of the kingdom.

'Ever

'Ever ſince I came within theſe hated walls, their ſavage maſter has aggravated my miſeries, by the mortifying offers of his love: totally regardleſs of my ſorrow and diſtraction, a thouſand times has the unfeeling wretch inſulted my torn heart with odious careſſes, and ſtill continues to perſecute me in the ſame manner, upbraiding me with ingratitude for what he calls his kindneſs in permitting me to live. But I am not alone in my misfortunes: here are numbers of unhappy women under the ſame confinement, whoſe ſufferings too nearly reſemble my own. Some of them, like me, have ſtill reſiſted the importunities of the tyrant; while others, more, I hope, through fear than inclination, have unhappily ſubmitted to his will.'

At theſe words, terror and apprehenſion were again rouſed in the heart of Solyman, and created a conflict which ſhook his frame. He ſtood aghaſt and motionleſs for a moment: at laſt recollecting himſelf, 'Is there,' ſaid he, 'tell me, madam, is there a lady within theſe walls, a native of Delhi, who was taken ſome months ago from on board a Kanarian veſſel by the Sundians?'

'To that queſtion,' ſaid the lady, 'I can make no anſwer: we are all kept in different apartments, and not allowed to converſe with each other; we are not even permitted, but alone, to walk in theſe gardens, and ſhould I now be obſerved to talk with you, though through theſe deteſted bars, my future liberty would probably be endangered. All that you can do to know whether the lady you have loſt be in this place, is to attend at the different hours of the day near theſe paliſadoes; here you will be able to obſerve, in their reſpective turns, the appearance of the women in the gardens. But you will incur great danger in the experiment: and, after all, ſhould you find that your lady is here, what can it avail you? You will only have the mortification to know it, without being able to reſcue her.'

CHAP. XX.

SOLYMAN took his leave of the lady; and, having formed his resolution, waited with the utmost impatience for the light of morning. He happened, indeed, to be so far secured from suspicion, as to be drest in a Sundian habit, which belonged to an officer of the ship that carried off Almena, who compelled him to take it in exchange for his own. But, insensible of danger, at the earliest dawn he hasted to his post, and passed the day in alternate hope and despair: he saw many women, but he saw not Almena. In the evening, therefore, regretting the disappointment even of those expectations which he dreaded to have confirmed, he resolved to quit his station till the return of morning, when, by the glimmering of the moon, he perceived another lady enter the garden.

As she came nearer, her image glanced through his heart more swiftly than the lightning smites the traveller on the mountains of Hima. The lady was Almena. In a burst of transport, he cried, 'Almena! Solyman!' Struck at once with the voice, the name, and the figure of Solyman, surprise overcame her, and she fell senseless upon the terras.

Solyman, unable to enter the garden, in an agony of terror, cried out, 'Save, save my Almena!' at the same time running round the walls in the utmost distraction. His exclamations alarmed the guard, who immediately secured him; though, from his cries and confusion, they concluded him to be mad, and their report of him as such to the governor of the castle, who ordered him to be immediately brought before him.

Solyman, the moment he beheld the governor, fiercely cried out, 'I conjure thee, if thou art a human being, let me instantly fly to the relief of a lady in the gardens. The governor was alarmed by an appearance of reason in this request; and ordered him to be secured, while he went himself into the gardens to know if there was any foundation for it. There he found Almena supporting herself

herſelf againſt the wall, not having perfectly recovered either her ſtrength or reaſon. Art thou, indeed, my Solyman?' ſaid ſhe, If thou art my Solyman, ſupport me in thy arms. In his arms he took her, and bore her to a pavilion, where he held her till her reaſon returned. She turned her eyes full upon him, and, with a look of fear and horror, ſhrunk from his embrace.

'Tell me, madam, I beſeech you, tell me,' ſaid the governor, 'what is the cauſe of this diſtraction? Why are thoſe dear eyes ſo full of wildneſs and horror, and why do you look upon your protector with ſuch averſion? Is there then ſome other perſon more happy in your favour and affection, and muſt I for ever languiſh at your feet in vain?'

'If thou haſt any other affection, for me,' ſaid Almena, 'than that which is inſpired by brutal inſtinct, if thou haſt more feeling than the walls that ſurround thee, thou wilt ſurely pity me. The dear unhappy man, whom I fear e'er now thy guards have ſeized, is the friend for whoſe loſs thou haſt known me mourn ever ſince I came within thy power. Yes, thou wilt pity me; for thou haſt wept: when I related to thee my miſeries, the tears of compaſſion flowed from thine eyes. Let us throw ourſelves at thy feet; let us owe our happineſs to thee, and thou ſhalt have all the affection which is not due to Solyman.'

The weeping beauty, as ſhe uttered theſe words, threw herſelf before him in ſuch an agony of ſorrow, and ſuch a poſture of ſupplication, as would have moved any heart in which vice had not extinguiſhed every ſpark of humanity. Far from being affected by it, the Governor of Sevaſir made her the following anſwer: 'Abſurd and vain! to ſuppoſe that I ſhould tamely yield that happineſs to another, which I could never obtain myſelf. Know, madam, that both you and your lover are now in my power; and that he has no indulgence to hope for, but what your kindneſs to me may procure him. With theſe words he withdrew; rather leſs offended at the thought of having a rival in Almena's affections,

 than

than pleaſed with the hope that he might terrify her into compliance, by his menaces againſt her lover.

Almena remained in the moſt pitiable diſtreſs, ſharpened by painful apprehenſions for her own honour, and the life of Solyman; and wandering alone into the garden, ſhe added one night of ſorrow more to the many ſhe had ſuffered.

Great God! what miſery may one villain, armed with power, bring upon thy creatures! Were there not a ſtate of exiſtence, where vice ſhall be puniſhed and virtue rewarded, how would thy works ſeem to reproach their Almighty Maker! But let the ſons of men learn, that he who is infinitely wiſe, is alſo perfectly juſt; and that he can as eaſily take cognizance of the moral conduct of his creatures, as he could at firſt create this immenſe ſyſtem of the univerſe, in which the minuteſt creature declares the ſkill of the Architect.

CHAP. XXI.

THE impious tyrant of Sevaſir enjoyed the balm of ſleep, and the refreſhment of reſt, while the virtuous Solyman and Almena ſuffered the moſt grievous affliction.

When the morning appeared, Nagrakut (that was the wretch's name) went at his uſual hour into the garden. Almena, who was ſtill there, overcome by the weight of continued ſorrow, had ſunk into a tranſient ſlumber on a bench in the pavilion. Nagrakut approached, and ſtood by her as ſhe ſlumbered. There was a ſight that might have excited tenderneſs in the breaſt of a ſavage: but it moved not the heart of Nagrakut, nor awakened any other paſſion in him but that of a libidinous deſire. In a dream, ſhe waved her hand, and cried, with a voice of mournful tenderneſs, 'Do not murder him, Nagrakut! Let my Solyman live!' Then letting fall the hand ſhe had raiſed, ſhe ſunk again into ſilent ſlumber.

Nagrakut yet felt no pity; but placing himſelf near her on the bench, incloſed her in his arms. She awoke; and,

and, finding herſelf in the embraces of the tyrant, ſhrieked out with the moſt diſtreſsful horror. Her cries pierced the cell where Solyman was confined. With the united ſtrength of rage and terror, he burſt the door of his priſon; and running through the apartments of the caſtle with a dagger in his hand, which he had fortunately ſnatched up in the way, he flew to the garden.

Almena was ſtill ſhrieking and ſtruggling in the arms of Nagrakut, who, endeavouring to ſooth her to his embraces, had not obſerved the approach of Solyman. 'Villain,' ſaid Solyman, 'remove thy execrable hands from the perſon of that lady, and employ them in the defence of thy own!' Nagrakut, who was the moſt abject coward, called aloud to his guards. 'Coward! ſlave!' ſaid Solyman, 'draw this inſtant, or my dagger ſhall pierce thy heart.' Nagrakut then fell at his feet; and begging for mercy, promiſed him Almena and liberty. 'This moment, then,' ſaid Solyman, 'diſmiſs us from thy curſed priſon.' No ſooner had he uttered theſe words, than the guards appeared. Nagrakut immediately beckoned to them to ſeize him, but Solyman obſerving his motion, haſtily ran up to him, and plunged his dagger into his heart.

The tyrant fell. No way of eſcape, however, was left for Solyman: he was inſtantly ſeized by the ſoldiers, loaded with heavy chains, and ſhut up, with Almena, in a ſtrong apartment of the caſtle: with Almena he was ſhut up, for jealouſy now no longer parted them; and ſhe was conſidered as an accomplice in the murder of the governor.

This circumſtance adminiſtered inexpreſſible conſolation to them both. 'At laſt, my Almena,' ſaid the lover, 'fortune has brought thee to my arms: but after what miſeries, good Heaven! and in what circumſtances! Yet my heart never once doubted the juſtice or the care of Providence: we ſhall yet be happy in the valley of Irwan.'

The ſpirits of Almena were ſo exhauſted by the ſucceſſive ravages of terror, ſorrow, and ſurprize, that ſhe

reclined for ſome time in the arms of Solyman, unable to ſpeak, and only venting her grief in broken and feeble ſighs. The officers of the caſtle of Sevaſir had ſent in the mean time to the king of Sundah, to know in what manner he would have the murderers of the governor executed.

The death of a villain is ſeldom regretted, even by thoſe to whom his villanies have been of ſervice. The king of Sundah always hated the governor Sevaſir; but he dared not depoſe him, becauſe he had been eſtabliſhed under him by the Mogul: he therefore ſent no other commands to the officers of the caſtle, but that the priſoners ſhould remain there till further orders.

Not long after this, a body of Kanarians entered the country of Sundah, and laid ſiege to the caſtle of Sevaſir. As the death of the governor had thrown all into confuſion, the fort was eaſily carried: and the Kanarians took priſoners all that were within the caſtle. Solyman and Almena, though they could not be diſpleaſed at this change of fortune, had yet another danger to encounter, which might prove as fatal to their happineſs as any they had eſcaped could have been.

It is a cuſtom in the eaſtern nations, to preſent the women that are taken in war to the kings, that they may ſelect whom they like; and the reſt are divided among the officers, according to their ſeveral ranks. All the ladies that were taken in the caſtle of Savaſir had this fate to undergo: and as the governor had been curious in his choice, theſe women were looked upon as a moſt valuable capture.

CHAP. XXII.

THEY were immediately conveyed to the court of Kanara, and preſented to the king for his choice. They all ſtood before him at the ſame time; and he looked upon each of them for ſome minutes; but his eye dwelt longer on Almena than the reſt. Unfortunately, ſhe obſerved this; and her fear and confuſion new animated her features, and gave freſh beauties to her complexion. The King immediately ſelected her, and the reſt were diſmiſſed.

Solyman was all this time kept with the garriſon of Sevaſir, as a priſoner of war: but at length, having convinced the Kanarians, that he had no connexions with the king of Sundah, and that he was willing to enter into the ſervice of their prince, his liberty was reſtored him. This was the only means by which he could attempt the recovery of Almena, who, as he was now informed, was retained by the King. He immediately repaired to the capital of Kanara; and ſignifying to the officers of the court, that he had ſome important intelligence relating to the war to communicate to his majeſty, he gained an eaſy admittance to him.

When the King appeared, he proſtrated himſelf before him; and being commanded to ſpeak, he thus expreſſed himſelf: ‘ Let the King of Kanara live! for his ear is open to the complaints of the unhappy, and he deſpiſeth no man for the miſeries which chance hath brought upon him.’

‘ I am a man,’ interpoſed the King. ‘ Proceed.’—‘ It was my hand that put an end to the life of your enemy the Governor of Sevaſir.’

‘ In that,’ replied the Prince, ‘ you did me a ſignal ſervice. But let me know your motives; and I ſhall be better able to judge of the action, as well as of my obligations to you for it.’

‘ O prince!’ ſaid Solyman, ‘ I was poſſeſſed of a lady, more beautiful than the ſtar that overflows its urn in the evening, and dearer to me than the life-drops of my heart.

We

We were on board a Kanarian veſſel that was trading to the Perſian Gulph; and were bound to the valley of Irwan in Meſopotamia the place of my nativity: but, alas! before we had proceeded many leagues from our coaſt, we were boarded by a pirate of Sundah. We were plundered, and diſmiſſed; but the dear partner of my heart was taken from me. After long ſearch, I found that ſhe was in the poſſeſſion of the Governor of Sevaſir; who, regardleſs of her miſeries, or the prepoſſeſſion of her heart, cruelly continued to inſult her with the offer of his love.'

'Inhuman wretch!' interrupted the King; 'but proceed.' This ejaculation gave Solyman new hopes, and he continued his relation.

'Walking one evening by the gardens of the fort, I diſcovered her on a terras at a ſmall diſtance. She was ſo much ſurpriſed by the ſuddenneſs of my appearance, that ſhe fainted. Being unable to enter the gardens, in my diſtraction I cried for help; and my cries alarming the guard, I was ſeized. That night I was confined in a dungeon of the caſtle; but early the next morning hearing the ſhrieks of a female voice, which I either knew, or fear imagined, to be that of my love, rage and terror gave me more than natural ſtrength, and I burſt open the door of my priſon. I was unarmed; but, fortunately, a dagger lying in my way, I ſnatched it up, and flew to the garden from whence the voice proceeded. There I beheld the dear object of my affections trembling in the embraces of the tyrant. At the ſight of me, he called aloud to his guards; cowardly refuſing the offer I gave him of defending himſelf againſt my dagger: nay, he meanly begged his life, and offered me, on that condition, liberty for myſelf and the lady; but the guards immediately after coming up, he beckoned to them to ſeize me: I found time, however, to thruſt my dagger into his baſe heart. Thus the villain periſhed.'—'And juſtice,' ſaid the King,' directed your arm.'

'O, prince!'

'O, prince!' continued Solyman, 'I am ſtill miſerable. I have reaſon to believe, that ſome of your officers will detain that lady, as a prize taken in the caſtle of Sevaſir.'

'No officer of mine,' replied the King, 'ſhall be ſuffered to detain her. Let me know her name, and ſhe ſhall be immediately reſtored to you.' Her name, ſaid Solyman, is Almena.'

The King appeared diſturbed, and walked backward and forward for ſome moments in the utmoſt confuſion. He knew that Almena was the lady whom he had ſelected from the captives; and he had the moſt ardent affection for her. In a few moments he withdrew, and commanded Solyman to attend him the following day.

CHAP. XIII.

THE heart of the king was, in the mean time, diſtracted by different paſſions; urged by the moſt powerful love to detain Almena, and diſſuaded from that by truth, humanity, and ſhame. 'Am I,' ſaid he, 'poſſeſſed of a throne, and ſhall I have no more power to indulge my wiſhes than the peaſant of the field? What is the worth or the end of abſolute power, if kings muſt tamely ſacrifice their inclinations to the creatures they were born to command? Shall I give up ſuch beauty as that of Almena? a beauty that has ſmitten my heart, and inſpired me with ſuch tenderneſs of affection as I never yet felt for woman? But Almena was Solyman's! It might be ſo; but ſhe is now mine. Poſſeſſion goes from one to another, according to the laws of nations, and by thoſe laws Almena is mine.

'Why then do I feel theſe uneaſy ſenſations, as much at the thoughts of keeping as of parting with her? The laws of nature, the unvariable laws of nature and truth create them. The laws of nations ought always to be founded on theſe; and theſe ſuggeſt to me, that to keep Almena, would be moſt injurious and inhuman. Shall I, who have condemned that in another, as a crime which deſerved the puniſhment of death, commit the very ſame myſelf? what a deteſtable hypocrite ſhould I appear! Shall I, who promiſed the lover, that none of my officers ſhould deprive him of Almena; ſhall I degrade the king by doing what I would have puniſhed in a ſubject? I love Almena, and ſhould be exquiſitely happy in the enjoyment of her; but ſhall I, therefore, make her miſerable? How ſhould I ever partake of happineſs, if the object of my affections lived with me in ſullen diſcontent, or inconſolable ſorrow? Baſe and unworthy of the heart of man muſt be that love, which would purchaſe its gratification by the miſery of its object! The heart of Almena is Solyman's, and ſo ſhall be her perſon. Painful is the alternative; but truth, and honour, and virtue, muſt prevail!'

Thus

Thus the generous king of Kanara overcame the efforts of importunate desire, by the force of virtue and reason; and nobly scorned to avail himself of his power against an unhappy man, who had been long persecuted by misfortune, and distressed in his love.

The hour came at which he had ordered Solyman to attend him. The king received him with a condescending smile; and, without the least appearance of uneasiness or dissatisfaction in his countenance, desired him not to be apprehensive about Almena, for that he should shortly be put in possession of her.

Having thus spoken, he went immediately to her apartment, and gently taking her hand, 'Most beautiful of the daughters of India,' said he, 'cease your sorrows! I am not now come to offer you my love; but to recommend to you another lover, who possibly may be happier in your favour than I could ever hope to be. He is now in the palace; and if you will give me leave, I will introduce him to you.'

'My heart,' said Almena, 'has been so much accustomed to new distresses, that it is not now shocked by their frequency: but if you have any pity for me, suffer me to bewail my miseries in solitude. Not to be interrupted, in my sorrows, is all I ask; and that is not, surely, too much for you to grant.'

The king answered with a smile, 'If I am not to be happy in your love, I am determined that none but the person whom I am about to introduce to you, shall be so;' and hastily quitting the apartment, he returned with Solyman.

The lovers flew to each others arms. 'My Solyman!' 'My Almena!' In a few moments being recollected, they threw themselves at the feet of the king; and Solyman, as well as the transports of his heart would give him leave, thus expressed his gratitude: 'Generous Prince,' said he, 'the thanks of Solyman are not worth your acceptance. But you will not be without a reward: Yours shall be the supreme pleasure of conscious goodness; yours shall be the care of the eternal Providence,

dençe, and the prayers and bleſſings of Solyman and Almena!"

In the gratitude of his heart, Solyman offered the king his aſſiſtance in the proſecution of the war with the Sundians; but he humanely refuſed his offer, telling him, that love and war were no allies; that his ſufferings had already been too many and too great; and that neither he ſhould be expoſed to danger, nor Almena to fear, on his account. He moreover told them, that if they were inclined to return by ſea to the valley of Irwan, they ſhould be attended by an armed veſſel, to ſecure them from the aſſaults of an enemy. But this obliging offer they declined. Solyman was unwilling any more to riſque that which was dearer than life; and Almena yet trembled at the thoughts of the Sundian pirate. They, therefore, notwithſtanding the length and tedioufneſs of the way, determined to go by land; and having taken leave of the King, who ſupplied them with every neceſſary, and ſent them his own beaſts and attendants, they ſet their faces towards Delhi.

CHAP. XXIV.

THEIR road was through a mountainous country, troublesome to the traveller; little cultivated by the labours, or enlivened by the habitations, of men. But what are the difficulties which love and hope cannot surmount? they despise the threats of danger, and the toils of labour; and proceed with resolution through those perplexities, which by other eyes are beheld with despair. The travellers, thus animated, and looking forward to those delightful scenes of rest, those days of rural ease and happiness which they should enjoy in the valley of Irwan, passed over the rugged mountains that opposed their way, without the least sense of weariness or fear.

After travelling many days without any accident or delay, more than the necessary refreshment of nature required, they arrived at Delhi. At the sight of her native place, Almena shed a tear of joy; and the lovers embraced each other with more than common tenderness: so much is there in the power of external circumstances to improve and exalt the pleasures of the mind. Almena always loved her Solyman with the most tender affection; but she loved him at Delhi more than in any other place. Delight is inseparable from the idea of those scenes where we have passed the happy hours of childhood; and though, when in the maturity of life, we revisit our native countries, we cannot enjoy that innocent thougutless cheerfulness of which we still retain some notion, yet we are delighted with the remembrance of it, and those scenes are always dear to us.

Almena forgot not to visit her village, and the people whom she called her own. The poor inhabitants, at the sight of their benefactress, wept with pleasure; and she did not leave them without giving them new exhortations to their duty, and new instances of her beneficence. Indeed, in all generous acts, she now redoubled all her assiduities; for she concluded, that, on account of her

great and ſingular obligations to Providence, ſhe ought, in gratitude, to have a ſuperior portion of virtue.

After a ſhort ſtay at Delhi, Solyman and Almena renewed their journey, and ſet forward to Iſaphan. This rout was longer; but it was more eaſy, and leſs expoſed to robbers than that which led to the Perſian gulph. When they arrived at Iſaphan, Solyman had the pleaſure to find his friend the merchant, who was ſtill detained by buſineſs in that city. He eaſily made his apology for not accepting, as he had propoſed, his kind offer of a paſſage into Europe, by introducing him to Almena. He related to him their various intereſting adventures, to which he liſtened with the eager curioſity and concern of a friend, acknowledging all along the hand of Providence in their preſervation. For the amiable and accompliſhed Almena, he felt great eſteem: her pathetic deſcriptions, and her juſt and natural obſervations, were extremely entertaining and affecting. But he was moſt charmed with the character of the king of Kanara; and requeſted Almena to relate every particular of his behaviour.

'When I firſt beheld him,' ſaid ſhe, 'I perceived in his countenance a noble affability and openneſs, which ſeemed to ſpeak a great and generous mind. This gave me ſome pleaſure; as I might have hopes from his compaſſion, ſhould it be my fate to be ſelected by him: ſuch, you know it was. When I was conducted into an apartment of the palace, he waited on me with the moſt affable politeneſs; and ſeeing me in tears, he gently took my hand, and ſpoke to the following effect: "Be not diſtreſſed, fair Almena! Though you are in the power of a prince, you are not in the hands of a tyrant. If time, and the aſſiduities of tenderneſs, may prevail on you to return my love, I ſhall be happy; if not, you ſhall never be made miſerable by cruelty or violence." 'Conſiſtent with this declaration, was his whole conduct to me during the time I was in his poſſeſſion. How I regained my liberty you have already heard.'

'To

'To the character which you have already received of the Kanarian prince,' ſaid Solyman to the merchant, 'I will add a poetical portrait, which poſſibly may not be diſagreeable to you: my gratitude for his favours, and my admiration of his virtues, induced me to attempt it.'

THE AMIABLE KING.

The freeborn muſe her tribute rarely brings,
Or burns her incenſe to the power of kings:
But Virtue ever ſhall her voice command,
Alike a ſpade or ſceptre in her hand.
Is there a prince untainted with a throne,
That makes the intereſt of mankind his own;
Whoſe bounty knows no bounds of time or place;
Who nobly feels for all the human race;
A prince that acts in reaſon's ſteady ſphere;
No ſlave to paſſion, and no dupe to fear;
A breaſt where mild humanity reſides;
Where virtue dictates, and where wiſdom guides;
A mind that, ſtretch'd beyond the years of youth,
Explores the ſecret ſprings of taſte and truth:
Theſe, theſe are virtues, which the muſe ſhall ſing;
And plant, for theſe, her laurels round a king!
Kanara's monarch! this ſhall be thy praiſe:
For this be crown'd with never fading bays!

'Your verſes,' ſaid the merchant, 'are very agreeable to me; for they are juſtly applicable to a prince whom every merchant in Great Britain has the greateſt reaſon to reſpect; and who is beloved by his ſubjects as much as a father by his children. He, too, is young, as is the king of Kanara. But I have lately had the pleaſure to hear of his marriage: and at the ſame time I received, from a literary correſpondent, an ode on the occaſion; which, as you have a poetical taſte, I ſhall make no ſcruple to offer you.'

HYMENEAL.

I.

Awake, thou everlaſting lyre!
That once the mighty Pindar ſtrung,
When, rapt with more than mortal fire,
The gods of Greece he ſung;
Awake;

Artleſs the rapid foot of time again,
With liquid notes of joy, and pleaſure's melting ſtrain.

II.

Crown'd with each beauteous flower that blows
On Acidalia's tuneful ſide;
With all Aonia's roſy pride,
Where numerous Aganippe flows;
From Theſpian groves and fountains wild,
Come thou yellow veſted boy,
Redolent of youth and joy,
* Fair Urania's favour'd child!
George to thee devotes the day:
Io, Hymen! haſte away!

III.

Daughter of the genial main!
Queen of youth and roſy ſmiles,
Queen of dimple dwelling wiles;
Come, with all thy Paphian train!
O give the fair that blooms for Britain's throne,
Thy melting charms of love, thy ſoul-enchanting zone!

IV.

Daughter of the genial main!
Bring that heart-diſſolving power,
Which once in Ida's ſacred bower
The ſoul of Jove oppos'd in vain:
The ſire of gods thy conquering charms confeſt:
And vanquiſh'd ſunk, ſunk down on Juno's foſtering breaſt.

V.

She comes! The conſcious ſea ſubſides;
Old Ocean curbs his thund'ring tides:
Smooth the ſilken ſurface lies,
Where Venus' flowery chariot flies:
Paphian airs in ambuſh ſleep
On the ſtill boſom of the deep;
Paphian maids around her move,
Keen-eyed Hope, and Joy and Love:
Their roſy breaſts a thouſand Cupids lave;
And dip their wanton wings, and beat the buxom wave.

* See Catullus.

VI.

But mark, of more than vulgar mien,
With regal grace, and radiant eye,
A form in youthful majeſty!
Britain, hail thy favour'd queen!
For her the conſcious ſea ſubſides;
Old Ocean curbs his thund'ring tides:
O'er the glaſſy boſom'd main
Venus leads her laughing train:
The Paphian maids more graceful by her ſide;
And, o'er the buxom waves, the roſy Cupids ride.

VII.

Fly, ye fairy-footed hours!
Fly, with aromatic flowers!
Such as bath'd in orient dews,
Beauty's living glow diffuſe;
Such as in Idalia's grove
Breathe the ſweets, the ſoul of love!

VIII.

Come, genial god of chaſte delight,
With wreaths of feſtive roſes crown'd,
And torch that burns with radiance bright,
And liberal robe that ſweeps the ground!
Bring thy day of golden joy,
Pleaſures pure that never cloy!
Bring to Britain's happy pair
All that's kind, and good, and fair!
George to thee devotes the day:
Io, Hymen haſte away!

IX.

Daughters of Jove! ye virgins ſage,
That wait on Camus' hoary age,
That oft his winding vales along
Have ſmooth'd your ſilver-woven ſong;
O wake once more thoſe lays ſublime,
That live beyond the wrecks of time!
To crown your Albion's boaſted pair,
The never-fading wreath prepare;
While her rocks echo to this grateful ſtrain,
'The friends of freedom and of Britain reign!'

'The ode you have obliged me with,' ſaid Solyman, 'though I do not very well underſtand it, gives me ſome idea of the enthuſiaſm and harmony of the Engliſhh poetry. But I am leſs pleaſed with the productions of art in your country, than with the affectionate duty which the people ſhew to their king; for that is the baſis of civil happineſs, and, indeed, every humane prince, who has the intereſt of his ſubjects at heart, will always reign in their affections.

'But now, my friend, if you are not too much taken up with your concerns at Iſaphan, will you be prevailed on to viſit the valley of Irwan? As you are a lover of nature, and of the muſes, you will there meet with much to entertain you; at leaſt, you will find a retreat from the fatigues of buſineſs, and the plagues of popularity. Almena too joins in this requeſt, and will be glad of ſo entertaining a friend in the firſt ſtages of her retirement.'

The merchant accepted the invitation, and they left Iſaphan the following day. He was deſirous to hear from Almena the ſtory of her captivity, and took the firſt opportunity to requeſt it: 'I have heard,' ſaid he, 'from Solyman, the greateſt part of your adventures; but I have not been informed how you paſſed that unhappy period of time, from your being taken by the Sundians, to your departure from the caſtle of Sevaſir.'

'You call back memory, Sir' ſaid Almena, 'to the days of miſery: but as I can, at this diſtance, look upon them without terror, I will endeavour to deſcribe them to you.

'When I was firſt taken by the Sundians, my diſtraction was ſo great, that I retain no idea of what paſſed, till the captain of the veſſel conveyed me on ſhore to the caſtle of Sevaſir, and preſented me, terrified and almoſt frantic as I was, to the deteſted governor; who, as I have been ſince informed, received ſuch kind of acknowledgments from the ſeamen, for protecting them in their illegal and piratical captures.

'The wretch, as well as I remember, ſeemed totally inſenſible to my miſery; and with a ſmile upon his countenance,

tenance, ordered his domeſtics to convey me to my apartments. Theſe, indeed, wanted neither elegance nor convenience; but I deſpiſed the one, and neglected the other. The firſt evening I paſſed in the moſt painful anguiſh for the loſs of Solyman, and the moſt dreadful apprehenſions of injurious treatment from the governor. The women that were about me, ſeemed the wretched remains of ruined innocence, who had firſt been victims to the deſires of the tyrant, and afterwards made his ſlaves. Dreadful was the ſcene I had before me! Some of theſe unhappy creatures ſeemed to pity me, and to be concerned for my approaching misfortunes; while others, who with their virtue had loſt their humanity, looked upon me with a careleſs ſcorn; pleaſed, I fear, with the thought, that they ſhould ſee one woman more as miſerable and as deſpicable as themſelves.

'Early the next morning, the governor came into my apartments; and caſting his eyes upon the bed, on which I had not repoſed, "It ſeems, Madam," ſaid he, with a ſcornful ſmile, "that you approve not of your lodgings; but a little time, it is to be preſumed, will reconcile you to us." 'Theſe morning viſits he conſtantly paid me; and as he always found me in ſullen ſorrow, he behaved much in the ſame manner. At laſt he changed his addreſs; ſeemed to pity me; aſked me for the ſtory of my misfortunes; and, I believe, wept when he heard it: but as I was aware of the hypocrite, I was equally regardleſs of his pity as I had been of his ſcorn: and ſtill continued to look upon him with the ſame forbidden verſion and diſdain.

'Thus paſſed my days in this confinement: but they would have been more intolerable, had I not found a harp in my apartment, which probably had been left there by ſome unhappy lady, who had poſſeſſed them before me. With this inſtrument I amuſed myſelf for many a melancholy hour, which muſt otherwiſe have paſſed away in the moſt miſerable langour. I alſo compoſed a ſong, ſuitable to my ſtate of mind and my misfortunes;

fortunes; which I adapted to my harp, and which, I think, was as follows:

SONG.

I.

'Tis o'er—the pleasing prospect's o'er!
My weary heart can hope no more—
Then welcome, wan Despair!
Approach with all thy dreadful train;
Wild Anguish, Discontent, and Pain,
And thorny-pillow'd Care!

II.

Gay hope, and ease, and joy, and rest,
All, all that charms the peaceful breast,
For ever I resign.
Let pale anxiety instead,
That has not where to lay her head,
And lasting woe, be mine.

III.

It comes! I feel the painful woe—
My eyes, for Solyman, will flow
In silent grief again;
Who wand'ring o'er some mountain drear,
Now haply sheds the pensive tear,
And calls on me in vain.

IV.

Perhaps along the lonely shores,
He now the sea's blue breast explores,
To watch the distant sail,
Perhaps, on Sundah's hills forlorn,
He faints, with aching toil o'erborne,
And life's last spirits fail.

V.

Ah! no—the cruel thought forbear!
Avaunt thou fiend of fell despair,
That only death canst give!
While Heaven eternal rules above,
Almena yet may find her love,
And Solyman may live

' Such, Sir, was my life in the caſtle of Sevaſir; which ſſed like the waters of Zenderound, that in ſome places e tortured by rocks and precipices, and in others lan-iſh in dull ſtagnation.'

CHAP. XXV.

THE travellers had now proceeded on their way t the valley of Irwan, at far as the village of Ab dat; where Solyman propoſed, that they ſhould viſit th lovers who owed their preſervation to him. Of this h was the more deſirous, as he had never ſeen them ſinc he had firſt recommended them to the protection of hi ther: but the pleaſure he propoſed to himſelf from thi viſit, aroſe not from a deſire of being flattered with thei acknowledgments, but of beholding and enjoying the happineſs.

The lovers received their benefactor with the greate ardour of gratitude; but at the ſame time with that de lic cy, which proved it to be ſincere. They were not lou in their acknowledgments, nor officious in their com pliments; but yet their attention to their gueſts ſhewe how much they were delighted with this opportunity c expreſſing their reſpect for Solyman. The travellers, i the mean time, were not leſs pleaſed to behold the p culiar happineſs of the lovers, who ſeemed to have b one heart, and one inclination. Solyman and Almen beheld in them a picture of themſelves; and felt mo ſenſibly their own felicity, when they had before them pleaſing an image of it.

The merchant too was delighted with this ſcene conjugal happineſs. ‘ Such,’ ſaid he to Solyman, ‘ a the genuine fruits of thoſe alliances which are made b love. When I behold them, I bluſh for myſelf and f my countrymen; for love, genuine love, as if it we no longer a paſſion eſſential to human nature, is look upon as an Utopian idea, exiſting only in the imagina tion of poets and enthuſiaſts: hence every tendency to is ridiculed as romantic, and modern marriages are onl contracts of convenience. A Britiſh lady is expoſed t ſale; and if ſhe has a good perſon, as well as an amp fortune, ſhe hopes by that addition only to fetch a high price, and make a better market. This, however, muſt be owned, is not the foible of the women only

the

the men are equally, if not more, mercenary; and have, if poſſible, more ſelfiſh views in their marriages; ſo that, in this caſe, cunning is only oppoſed to cunning. All this proceeds from that miſchievous opinion, which meaſures happineſs by the poſſeſſions of fortune. Hence that mutual coldneſs and indiffence, which both experience before the marriage torch is extinct: from new acquiſitions of wealth, each expects new degrees of felicity, and both are diſappointed. When they find themſelves miſtaken, deſtitute of that affectionate tenderneſs which endears the married ſtate, they look upon each other as the cauſe of diſcontent, and diſguſt and averſion ſucceed. Thus they ſacrifice to vanity, and reap the fruits of it.

From the village of Abdat, Solyman and Almena, with their friend the merchant, proceeded to the valley of Irwan, where they found the aged Ardavan ſtill living, and enjoying all the faculties of nature. The benevolent Sage rejoiced to receive his ſon, not only ſafe from the dangers of travel, but happy in the enjoyment of his love; and, with a heart full of tenderneſs, he thus conferred on both his paternal benediction:

'Children of the heart, and comfort of the years of Ardavan! Solyman ſhall be as the ſun when he cometh from the chambers of the eaſt, when he ſpreadeth his glories over the waves of Ganges: my ſon ſhall be as the Euphrates, the river of plenty, whoſe waves are the delight of a thouſand meadows; he ſhall be like the roe upon the mountains, that danceth in the vigour of his heart, and ſaith to the fence of the huſbandman, What art thou? His head ſhall be crowned with the rays of Mithra, becauſe his heart melted with compaſſion, and becauſe his hand was ſtretched forth to relieve the children of affliction!

'Almena is fairer than the women of the eaſt: ſhe is more virtuous than the daughters of men: love dwelleth in her heart, and benevolence ſitteth in her eye. She ſhall be like the tree that droppeth balm upon the flowers of Irwan; as the ſtar of the evening reflected from the river

river. Her countenance ſhall be pleaſant as the calm ſurface of the ocean, when the gilded clouds of evening blaze upon its boſom; ſhe ſhall be as the moon, when ſhe lendeth her rays to the traveller, and ſheddeth a mild light over the groves and vallies. Her voice ſhall be as the voice of the turtle, calling to her mate in the thickets of the foreſt. Like the ſtars that ſurround the chariot of the moon, ſhall be the children of Almena; beautiful as the plants of the cedar, and ſprightly as the fawns upon the mountains!"

Thus, bleſſed by the voice of Ardavan, and happy in themſelves, the virtuous Solyman and Almena live in the valley of Irwan! Each day is endeared by the delights of tender love; and the remembrance of paſt diſtreſſes is attended only with the pleaſing ſenſations of gratitude to that Being whoſe providence is over all his works.

FINIS.